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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Head on Lifting Iraqi Sanctions

JN2407195491 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Interview with Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid by Maha al-Sha'ir in Amman on 24 July—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Sha'ir] What is the Arab League doing to promote the peace process now that Mr. Baker was in his fifth tour to the Middle East? What do you have to say about that, and what is the Arab League doing about it?

['Abd-al-Majid] Well, let me say that we support this peace initiative. We consider it very appropriate. The timing also is very important. It is long overdue. What we have received as information from Syria, from Lebanon, is encouraging. I think the position of President al-Asad in answering President Bush was also a very positive approach, and I am sure the consultations that I will have here today with his majesty the king and the Government of Jordan will help to know more about this peace process. I am sure that from the Arab side, there is a strong desire to achieve a just settlement for the Middle East.

[Al-Sha'ir] The Gulf war now is behind us, and the economic sanctions on Iraq are affecting the Iraqi people. What are you doing to lift these sanctions?

['Abd-al-Majid] Well, I am sure we certainly would like to see these sanctions lifted, and the Iraqi people return to their normal life. But I must say also that it is the Iraqi Government that has accepted Security Council Resolution 687 and they are implementing this resolution. And what we hope is that these sanctions should not affect the Iraqi people and put an end to its suffering.

Arab Maghreb Union Concludes 9th Council Meeting

Morocco's Filali Comments

LD2407165991 Rabat MAP in English 1253 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Rabat, July 24 (MAP)—The results recorded by the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) prompt optimism despite the difficulties and problems hampering Maghreban integration that cannot be materialized overnight, but step by step, said Moroccan Minister of State to Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali.

In a statement to "MAP" at the end of the ninth session of the UMA ministerial council held here July 22-23, Filali said the union is now at a turning point, regarding not only inter-Maghreban relations, but also UMA's relations in the Mediterranean, European, Arab and African environments.

He said Maghreban foreign ministers who worked "in a spirit of frank and fruitful dialogue" decided to take a break to ponder on what has been completed since the UMA inception two years and a half ago.

Conclusions reached after this reflection will enable them adopt a new working strategy and set priorities at the short, mid and long terms, Filali said adding that the foreign ministers requested the follow up committee to draw a balance sheet on past action and make proposals for the future. The committee's report will be submitted to the ministerial council's upcoming session.

Dealing with UMA's relations with other regional groupings, namely the EEC, Filali said "The Maghreb has every chance, even before completing the full integration, to deal with the EEC in a more coordinated way".

"Our European partners are prompted by the same resolve to promote cooperation", Filali said pointing out that "this cooperation will be more beneficial if viewed from a comprehensive viewpoint". The EEC, he said, has every interest to deal with the Maghreb as a community.

The head of Moroccan diplomacy said the UMA acting presidency (Morocco) has been entrusted with getting in touch with the EEC chairmanship held by the Netherlands to set a date for the EEC-UMA meeting.

As to cooperation within the G-5+4 (UMA countries and France, Italy, Portugal and Spain), Filali said this regional cooperation falls in the context of the western Mediterranean explaining that given the close economic relations existing between the two sides, it is possible to find specific cooperation channels in what is called "co-development".

Dealing with the Maghreb relations with Africa, Filali said the Marrakesh treaty setting up the UMA provides for the Maghreb's overture on Africa with which it has historical, religious, commercial and cultural relations.

Filali expressed hope that a meeting between UMA and ECOWAS (Economic Commission of West African States) will be shortly held recalling that contacts were made with the ECOWAS under the Algerian chairmanship.

The Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) gathers Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Libya and Morocco.

End to Iraqi Embargo Urged

LD2407170391 Rabat MAP in English 1315 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Rabat, July 24 (MAP)—Member countries of the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) hope the United Nations [UN] will alleviate the embargo decreed against Iraq, Moroccan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali said.

In a statement to "MAP" Tuesday at the end of the two-day ninth session of the UMA ministerial council, Filali said the Maghreb countries hope that the UN will positively respond to the request made by the UN secretary general's personal representative in the region prince Sadr Eddine Aga Khan who demanded alleviation

of the embargo to enable Iraq purchase the necessary foodstuffs and medicine and consequently "save children and human lives".

Dealing with the Middle East, Filali voiced the "concern" of Arab countries and UMA members over the Israeli settlement policy in the occupied Arab territories. If this policy is carried on, he said, it will not only foil a peaceful solution to the problem but also erase the identity of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

To a question on UMA's contribution to the settlement of the Middle East problem in the prospect of the proposed peace conference, Filali said Maghreb countries are bound by the resolutions of the Arab summits of Fez and Casablanca, especially with regard to the Palestinian people's legitimate rights and above all its right to self-rule.

Algeria's Brahimi Reviews Talks

LD2407122291 Algiers APS in English 1030 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Rabat, 24/9/91 (APS)—The Foreign Affairs Minister Lakhdar Brahimi left on Tuesday Rabat, at the end of a visit to Morocco during which he notably represented Algeria to the works of the 9th session of the Ministerial Council of the UMA [Arab Maghreb Union] member countries. In a statement to the press, before his departure, Lakhdar Brahimi stressed that this visit to Morocco enabled him to participate for the first time to works of the Council of the foreign affairs ministers of the member countries of the Union and to have talks on bilateral questions with his Moroccan counterpart, Abdellatif Filali, talks he qualified as important and fruitful for a greater rapprochement and a better understanding between the two peoples and the two countries.

This visit, Lakhdar Brahimi added, was crowned by the audience that King Hassan II devoted to the Maghrebin foreign affairs ministers and during which the Maghrebin ministers presented to the Moroccan king results of their works.

Palestinian Affairs

Abu-Sharif on Need for 'New Blood' in Leadership

LD2407141491 Rabat MAP in English 1345 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Moscow, July 24 (MAP)—Radical reforms are currently undertaken within the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), announced Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to the Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

In a statement to Soviet news agency "NOVOSTI", Abu-Sharif said the PLO is in dire need for a new blood namely in the leadership which should be held by officials more attached to a peaceful settlement with Israel, otherwise the PLO's future as a political organisation will be jeopardized.

According to the Palestinian official, the upcoming session of the Palestinian parliament-in-exile to be held next November will be decisive as it will announce changes in the ongoing struggle between conservatives and reformers in the Palestinian resistance.

Role of Jerusalem in Peace Negotiations Viewed

JN2407181691 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Brothers, Jerusalem is the red line for any settlement, negotiations, conference, and any international or regional activity, whether American or non-American, to tackle the Arab-Israeli dispute, even on the pretext of enforcing security and stability in the region. Jerusalem is the measure of seriousness that differentiates between sincere efforts to reach a truly just, comprehensive solution and the deceptive, mean tricks that are aimed at liquidating the Palestine question and forcing the Arabs to surrender to an Israeli peace based on Israeli conditions and supported by the U.S. impetus and the U.S. Administration's constant and absolute bias toward Israel.

Jerusalem is not a geographic location that can be bargained over. Neither is it a location on which views and interpretations may vary. Jerusalem cannot be relinquished; it is the meeting point for faiths and religions. Jerusalem cannot be trusted to the untrustworthy Zionists who base their claim [to Jerusalem] on the assumption that the third temple is underneath the al-Aqsa Mosque. The Zionists have for years been trying to conduct excavations under the mosque; they set the mosque on fire in the most dangerous act in history which could have removed this holy Islamic monument; they stormed, seized, and desecrated the Greek church; and are threatening the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The Jerusalem issue cannot be put off. Regardless of the U.S. Administration's deceptive or adventurous reasoning, which demands a postponement of the Jerusalem issue until an advanced stage in the negotiations since it constitutes a great obstacle, the Arab answer should be decisive and should be in harmony with the clear Palestinian answer, which states that the Jerusalem issue cannot be harmed or postponed, because this would mean only one thing—namely, accepting the Judaization of Jerusalem, or at least accepting the idea of Judaization as something which can be discussed. Inflexibility regarding the issue of Jerusalem should be interpreted in this context. From a Palestinian angle, Jerusalem is the holiest of cities. Therefore, the participation of Jerusalemites in any Palestinian delegation should be viewed as a move to contain the Israeli and U.S. intentions, especially the devious U.S. intentions, which are trying to postpone the Jerusalem issue in the manner of criminal wagering aimed at bypassing the essential issues in the interests of Israel.

Based on its confidence in national Palestinian unanimity and in its capacity as the Palestinians' sole representative, the PLO does not take into consideration the geographic distribution of the Palestinian delegation. However, the matter of the representation of the Jerusalem Palestinians is another issue. This issue cannot be tainted by anyone or even be subjected to complicated or simple uncertainty.

'Arafat Says U.S. Deal Leaves Only 'Scraps'

JN2407184791 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat today charged that the United States is not seeking peace in the Middle East, but is endeavoring to normalize Israeli-Arab ties and leave the scraps for the Palestinians in the form of another Camp David agreement.

In a statement to the French Magazine L'EVENEMENT D'AUJOURD'HUI, 'Arafat said Washington even rejects the Palestinians' right of self-determination, which is a sacred right the world over, adding that while Washington dispatched its troops to protect the Kurds, the Palestinians are dying of hunger in Gaza, and the Americans are doing nothing.

'Responsible' Source Denies Report on Delegation

JN2507072791 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Jul 91 p 23

[Text] Amman—A responsible Palestinian source has denied that the names published by the Israeli newspaper 'AL HAMISHMAR are members of the Palestinian delegation, saying this is merely speculation.

The source stressed that the delegation will be made up of figures from the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, and deportees.

The source stressed the right of the Palestinian people to choose their representatives and the right of the PLO to represent the Palestinian people.

According to the source, the formation of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation is an Arab affair, and what matters is not the form, but the content; that is, U.S. and Israeli recognition of the right to self-determination and the removal of occupation from Palestinian and Arab territories.

Press reports yesterday cited 'AL HAMISHMAR as reporting the names of the members of the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation as follows: Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, Ilyas Frayj, Mustafa 'Abd-al-Ghani al-Natshah, Zuhayrah Kamal, Dr. Ghassan al-Khatib, Mahir al-Masri, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, and Dr. Zakariyah al-Agha.

Al-Najjab Discusses Problems Facing PLO

PM2407132891 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Jul 91 p 5

[Report on interview with PLO Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] Despite the severe difficulties facing the PLO at present, there are those who are trying to ignore and turn their back on them, preferring to conclude from these difficulties that it is all over and the PLO has no other option but to capitulate.

But there is a realistic and responsible position that characterizes the principal forces among Palestinian ranks. They see these difficulties as they are, and believe that they can actually be surmounted.

But first, what are these difficulties?

PLO Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab answered this question by saying: The PLO is currently passing through a very critical stage as a result of the following difficulties:

First, the great change in the international situation and the collapse of the socialist camp, which was a guaranteed ally of the Palestinian people and their just rights. We do not say that all these states have changed their position, but they are now busy with their own problems, and their interests may force them to change their position on the Palestine issue. While this is understood, what is not understood is these states' (and the Soviet Union is the one intended here) putting pressures on the PLO to accept stances that do not agree with the Palestinian people's higher national interests.

Second, the tide of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union to Israel and the subsequent dangerous Israeli settlement policy.

Third, the great difficulties facing not only the Palestinian people but all the Arab peoples without exception. These difficulties stem from Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and were followed by a severe split in the Arab ranks.

Fourth, the difficulties facing the Palestinians in Kuwait and the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon, in addition to the difficulties facing the people's intifadah in the occupied territories.

Numerous parties believe that all this has affected the PLO's reputation, status, and role. In fact some circles go further and hold the PLO responsible for all this.

It is clear that Israel is trying to exploit all these difficulties for the sake of perpetuating the occupation of the Palestinian and Arab territories, ignoring all international legal resolutions on this occupation, escalating its repressive actions against the intifadah and its brutal practices against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, and doubling its settlement operations. The United States is exploiting these difficulties to prompt

international and Arab parties to isolate the PLO and exclude it from the peace process which it is currently leading.

With regard to the current pressures on the PLO, Sulayman al-Najjab said that "the main aim of this pressure is to exclude the PLO from the political peace process." This, in the knowledge that Baker's tours of the region have avoided the PLO from the beginning. The U.S. secretary is looking for an alternative to it from inside the occupied territories. In addition, pressures are being exerted by numerous parties to force the PLO to abandon the principle of independent or equal Palestinian representation, limiting the PLO's role to giving the go-ahead for Palestinians from inside to participate in negotiations with Israel, while warning it not to reveal this publicly.

It is known that President George Bush directly or indirectly sent messages to numerous leaders of the states concerned in the region vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict, but he still refuses to talk to the PLO.

The idea of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegtions is now being strongly raised by parties that refuse to heed the PLO's explanations and demands for guarantees.

I would like to point out here that Jordan has not officially raised the idea of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation with the PLO. All the parties discussing the idea with us are outside the Palestinian-Jordanian circle.

Al-Najjab pointed out that these parties include primarily the United States, through its meetings with the nationalist figures in the occupied territories, the Soviet Union, and some European states. Although the PLO's position is very clear and is ratified in official statements issued by the Palestinian leadership—in which it expressed its decision to deal flexibly with the subject of the form of Palestinian representation in the peace process so as to serve the real substance of the conference's work and to compel Israel to respect and implement international legal resolutions, guarantee its withdrawal from the Arab and Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, and recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination—all the parties which are discussing the joint delegation question with us are refusing to provide any guarantees or to commit themselves to any pledge entailing an Israeli withdrawal and guaranteeing the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

Sulayman al-Najjab pointed out that the danger of this request lies in demanding that the Palestinian people relinquish all their achievements and the PLO, and that they forfeit international recognition of their cause and their right to national independence, without anything in return—something which no Palestinian leader will accept. The Arab states concerned are very cautious about this request, whose acceptance would result in national and pan-Arab responsibilities.

Al-Najjab said that the only guarantee of overcoming all these difficulties facing the Palestinian issue and for standing fast in the face of all these pressures is, first and foremost, the persistence of the Palestinian people—both inside and in the diaspora—in adhering to their national rights and bolstering their struggle to secure their legitimate rights.

Second, to mend the Arab rift and surmount current disputes.

The PLO will continue its efforts in this regard, especially since backing for the Palestinian people and support for their rights are not subject to disagreement among these states.

The Palestinian leadership will also continue its moves at the international level to mobilize international efforts in support of convening an international peace conference and commitment to international law and the need to implement it. It will also work for an approach to the UN Security Council, inasmuch as it is the only body capable of implementing its resolutions, as the recent events in the Gulf have shown.

DFLP Still Split Despite Reconciliation Bids

PM2507081491 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Jul 91 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Failure of Hawatimah-'Abd-Rabbuh Meeting Perpetuates Democratic Front Split"]

[Text] Tunis, AL-HAYAH—Informed Palestinian sources yesterday told AL-HAYAH that recent attempts to restore unity to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] have failed and that the Nayif Hawatimah wing is currently holding a conference for its supporters in Damascus with an eye towards renewing the front's Central Committee and securing absolute majority support for him on it.

The sources revealed that the split between the two wings, represented by Hawatimah and PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, was perpetuated following the failure of the series of meetings held in Damascus on 11 and 12 July. Beside Hawatimah and 'Abd-Rabbuh, the meetings, which lasted over 15 hours, were attended by Qays al-Samarra'i (Abu-Layla), an Iraqi belonging to the front's historic leadership who supports Hawatimah, and 'Isam 'Abd-al-Latif (Abu-al-'Abd 'Isam), a Palestinian Political Bureau member who supports 'Abd-Rabbuh.

Sources close to the 'Abd-Rabbuh wing say that the conference being held in Damascus is "illegitimate," because the Central Committee has been urging the convening of a general congress since the eruption of the front's internal crisis last year, and it has formed a preparatory committee to that end. Palestinian sources emphasize that half of the Executive Committee members are boycotting the Damascus conference. This is in

addition to the organization inside (the occupied territories) and a considerable number of organizations outside. However, they are being attended by representatives of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party, which is regarded as an extension of the DFLP in Jordan.

Neutral Palestinian sources have linked the holding of the Damascus conference by the Hawatimah wing, which is seeking to limit DFLP representation, with preparations for the next Palestine National Council session, since this wing will demand the front's share on the National Council.

Neutral Palestinian sources observing developments within the DFLP say that attention has so far focused on the position of the Palestinian leadership and the Executive Committee, which is to refuse to acknowledge the split within the DFLP, leaving the front's representation within PLO institutions as it is. This position was translated into practice at Central Council meetings, since the council refused to make any amendments to the front's representation. As a result, Salih Ra'fat remained the front's representative on the Central Council; Mamduh Nawfal remained its representative on the High Committee for the Affairs of the Occupied Homeland and the Intifadah Committee; and Dr. 'Azmi al-Shu'aybi remained on the Intifadah Committee in Amman.

Members belonging to the wing led by 'Abd-Rabbuh remained representatives on the Unified Leadership of the Intifadah, the Womens Council, the Labor Union, and the other establishments in the occupied territories, with 'Abd-Rabbuh retaining his PLO Executive Commitee membership.

Hawatimah's supporters strongly deny the accusation leveled at them by 'Abd-Rabbuh's supporters, that they are seeking to "Jordanize" the front. The 'Abd-Rabbuh tendency bases this on the fact that Hawatimah is a Jordanian, while the most notable members of his tendency are non-Palestinians (one Iraqi and another Lebanese). Those close to the Hawatimah tendency reply to this accusation by saying that 'Abd-Rabbuh is trying to "Palestinize the front, that is, to limit its concerns to Palestinian affairs alone."

Qaddumi, PFLP-GC Leaders Meet, View Issues

JN2407184091 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Abu-al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department], who is currently on a visit in Damascus, visited the General Secretariat office of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], where he met with Ahmad Jibril, Talal Naji, Fadl Shururu, and 'Umar al-Shihabi. The meeting, which was attended by 'Abd-al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar and Mustafa Qarashuli, lasted for about two and a half hours. They discussed various issues of interest to the Palestinian arena. Discussions focused in particular on the issue of a comprehenesive Palestinian dialogue and the need to hold it as soon as possible, provided that all groups take part.

Algeria

FIS Sets Conditions for Talks With Government

LD2407162891 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] In Algeria, the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] refuses to take part in a meeting between the opposition parties and the Algerian Government unless its imprisoned leaders are freed—Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj. Moreover, FIS denounces the government's plan to sell part of the Hassi Messaoud oilfields to foreign concerns.

New Party Applies for Legalization, Outlines Aims

LD2407191891 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 0600 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] The 50th party, the new-generation Algerian Movement for Liberties and Islamic Democracy [Mouvement Algerian des Libertes et Choura—MALC] introduced itself yesterday. Its president, Mr. Naaman Saada, outlined its objectives. The party supports a market economy with some state control, taking into consideration the poorest strata of society, the autonomy of the Central Bank, and the return of Algerian capital now invested abroad.

The MALC was formed in Marseilles in 1985 and its application for legalization was handed over to the Interior Ministry last Sunday. Created in Marseilles, the party includes immigrants from three generations of Harkis [Algerians who fought for France during the war of liberation]. The party emphasizes its commitment to defend the interests and rights of the immigrant community in France.

Al-Qadhdhafi Envoy Holds Talks With Bendjedid

LD2407170491 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] President Chadli Bendjedid this morning received at the Presidency Ibrahim Muhammad al-Bishari, secretary of the Libyan People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation and special envoy of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution. The meeting took place in the presence of Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi and Messaoud Ait Chaalan, political adviser at the Presidency.

Al-Bishari made a statement to the press as he left the president's bureau . He pointed out that he had conveyed a verbal message from Col. al-Qadhdhafi to President Chadli Bendjedid on bilateral relations and the Libyan people's solidarity with the Algerian people. He added: We expressed our solidarity with our Algerian brothers at this difficult stage, in view of the importance of the Algerian role on the Maghreban, Arab, and international level.

Egypt

Iraqi Nuclear Equipment Said Sent to Algeria

NC2407180791 Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 22 Jul 91 p 1

[Text] The CIA, the French intelligence service, and the Geneva-based committee investigating nuclear proliferation were convinced that Iraq would be able to manufacture its first nuclear bomb within two years. The nuclear facilities and material in question, however, have disappeared.

Many Western security agencies are secretly investigating reports from their agents in the Middle East that the nuclear equipment and material in question were transported by air to Algeria a few days after the UN Security Council issued its first resolution imposing a naval and land blockade on Iraq.

Washington was extremely disappointed when it received a report from the UN committee that visited Baghdad to inspect Iraq's nonconventional weapons before eliminating them. The report said that all nuclear equipment had disappeared from Iraqi research centers. According to CIA information, at least four research centers existed, two of which were supposedly located near Baghdad. The Iraqis insist that they have only one center, and that it was destroyed during the intensive air raids.

The Americans are now confident that the Iraqis transferred their nuclear arsenal and a large number of their Scud missiles and sophisticated Sukhoi aircraft to Arab countries. Reports indicate that Iraqi experts and scientists working on nuclear projects have moved to Algeria. The information adds that Iraq stored 400 Scud missiles in Yemen and Sudan, and that the Algerian Government helped Saddam store the nuclear equipment.

Perhaps the U.S. decision to appoint Mary Ann Casey, an intelligence and research expert, as Washington ambassador to Algiers to succeed Christopher Ross was prompted by this information.

Reportage on Mubarak's Visit to Great Britain

WA2507132391

For reportage on the visit by President Husni Mubarak to Great Britain, including reports on his talks with British Prime Minister John Major, Labor Party leader Neil Kinnock, and Paddy Ashdown, parliamentary leader of the Social and Liberal Democratic Party, see the United Kingdom section of the 25 July West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Agreement Reached With U.S. on Debt Payment

NC2007103091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2150 GMT 19 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jul (MENA)—Egypt and the United States have reached an agreement on how Egypt will repay its $5 billion debt to the United States. The debt will be repaid over 20 years, following an immediate four-year grace period, at an interest rate not to exceed 2.8 percent.

AL-AHRAM published the details of the agreement on Saturday and said that the Egyptian parliamentary delegation ended two weeks of talks with senior U.S. officials from the State Department, Congress, USAID, and the IMF. Kamal al-Shadhili, head of the Egyptian delegation, said that IMF Director Michel Camdessus has conveyed a message to President Mubarak expressing his appreciation of his role in implementing economic reforms program. Egypt's debt to the United States totalled $12 billion before that country wrote off $7 billion worth of military debts following the Gulf war.

Ghali Seeks Arab, African Support for UN Post

JN2107145791 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0900 GMT 21 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Al-Sharsqah, 21 Jul (WAKH)—Dr. Butrus Ghali, Egyptian deputy prime minister for foreign liaison and minister of emigration and Egyptians abroad affairs, has urged Arab countries to take part in creating the new world order.

In an interview with AL-KHALIJ today on the occasion of his nomination to the post of the secretary general of the United Nations, Ghali said the end of the cold war and the Gulf war and the prevailing spirit in the world today have proven that there is a general agreement on a new, active role for the United Nations in thrashing out world problems and disputes. [passage omitted]

Ghali asserted that all parties to the Palestinian problem want to see it resolved. The UN role in resolving this dispute stems from the fact that Resolutions 242 and 338, which are the basis of the solution, were issued by the Security Council, and therefore, it is responsible for enforcing them. We welcome any move that could activate the peace process in the region, which has long suffered from instability, he said.

He explained that the aim of his nomination for this post is to enable an African and Arab to win the post of UN secretary general. To achieve this, African leaders, who met in Abuja in Nigeria last June, decided to set up a committee made up of the presidents of Egypt, Zambia, Tanzania, Zaire, Mozambique, and Togo, in order to receive nominations in alphabetical order, and then to run an election campaign for African nominees. The aim behind this is not to confine the nomination to one person, but to nominate several African figures so that one of them could win the approval of the five permanent Security Council members.

Ghali expressed the hope that brotherly Arab countries and friendly African states would stand behind him and give to his nomination for this post, which no Arab nor African has held since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945.

He added: I hope I will be a man for peace and that the United Nations will assume a greater role in shouldering its grave responsibilities to establish peace and security all over the world. [passage omitted]

AL-AHRAM Comments on Baker's Latest Visit

NC1807100891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0713 GMT 18 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 18 Jul (MENA)—In a commentary today, AL-AKHBAR newspaper expresses the hope that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's fifth tour of the Middle East will be the last in his series of visits preparing the ground for the talks on Middle East problems. The paper highlights the obstacles created by Israeli officials since the visit was announced and the provocative statements Israeli officials have been making in order to undermine every attempt to break the deadlock to the peace efforts.

AL-AKHBAR says: We have no doubt that the United States is more aware than we are of Israeli maneuvers, tactics, and devious goals. All we hope is that President Bush and Secretary of State Baker will not permit the so-called "special relationship" between the United States and Israel to make them ignore principles, laws, international charters, and justice. All these factors are essential and must be followed if a genuine and lasting peace is truly the goal behind all of Washington's recent activity.

Opposition Leaders Denounce Threats Against Iraq

NC2407164891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1317 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 24 Jul (MENA)—In a statement issued here today, leaders of Egyptian opposition parties denounced U.S. threats against Iraq, saying they are unjustifiable following Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait.

The statement noted that any move, especially one that concerns nuclear programs, must be a balanced one, noting that the same principles should be applied to all parties equally.

In the statement, the opposition urged an end to the authorization the Security Council gave the allies to operate in the region and for equitable criteria to applied all parties to the conflict.

U.S. 'Pretext' To Attack Iraq Denounced

NC2407164391 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 21 Jul 91 p 7

[From the "Opinion" column: "Unacceptable Threat"]

[Text] President George Bush has again threatened to strike Iraq on the pretext that it has refused to reveal where all its nuclear facilities are located. French President Francois Mitterrand voiced his support for President Bush's threat.

The politically and militarily active Arab countries, led by Egypt and Syria, rejected the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and participated in the liberation of Kuwait with troops and materiel. The destruction of the Iraqi people and their armed forces, however, was never part of the plan.

The new U.S. threats demonstrate the desire to annihilate Iraq. Arab countries should now adopt a unified stance rejecting Iraq's destruction. The U.S. Administration must understand the reality of the regional situation: the increasing Israeli nuclear capabilities and its monopoly of nuclear weapons. The United States must not be concerned only with eliminating Iraq's nuclear weapons.

The Iraqi president's declaration to accept an Egyptian inspection team reveals to the world that the United States is merely searching for a pretext to attack Iraq.

Column Warns U.S. Against Attacking Iraq

NC2007111191 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 18 Jul 91 p 12

["Weekend" column by Muhammad Abu-Hadid]

[Text] A peaceful way must be reached to settle the problem of the nuclear installations and material that the United States says Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has deliberately hidden in violation of Security Council Resolution 687, which was passed on 4 April.

No Arab wants the climate of tension, anxiety, and frustration that accompanied the war of liberation of Kuwait to return to the region. No Arab wants the situation to become complicated or to reach the point of giving the United States the chance to undertake a new military strike against Iraq to destroy what is left of the Iraqi people's assets or their hopes for the future.

The United States may lose a great deal of what it gained in the war to liberate Kuwait if it initiates a new military strike against Iraq. The situation is now completely different from when the United States began its international military and political concentration after 2 August 1990, or when it began the war to liberate Kuwait on 17 January 1991.

In the war for the liberation of Kuwait, it was easy for the United States to find allies and supporters in the Arab world and worldwide. At that time it was a question of principle and no one dared support aggression against a people, seizure of all their land, abolishing the identity of a country, and annexation by force, as Saddam Husayn did with Kuwait. What happened then was an unprecedented international catastrophe and nothing in international law supported it. In addition, the United States did not take a single step without clear and unequivocal Security Council resolutions that totalled 12 at the start of the war. Most of these resolutions were passed by a vast majority.

Despite the fact that the issue of the war and its complete support at the Security Council were clear, the war and the United States still received some criticism. The situation now is completely different. Kuwait has been liberated: This is the primary and substantive issue for which the world stood up militarily, politically, and financially with conviction and faith that stance represented support for principles and recognition of international legitimacy.

The issue the United States is currently raising is a specific and secondary one; that is, Saddam Husayn's violation of one article of Security Council Resolution 687 regarding the nuclear installations or material Iraq possesses. The articles of this resolution are clear and unequivocal. It demands that Iraq submit a statement outlining the sites, quantities, and the types of any installations, material, or research groups fit for use in nuclear weapons, that it place all of these material under the full control of the International Atomic Energy Energy [IAEA], and that it allow the IAEA and its representatives to inspect its nuclear capabilities to make sure that it complied.

Iraq has done that. The remaining problem is whether Iraq has given "all" that it really has, or has it hidden or concealed some of what it has? There is nothing in any of the 34 articles that comprise Security Council Resolution 687 that provides for specific sanctions against Iraq if it violates the resolution's articles. Resolution 687 can be summed up by quoting its last paragraph: The Security Council "decides that it will continue to follow up the issue of taking any other steps that may be necessary to implement this resolution and establish peace and stability in the region."

Thus, the Security Council in its entirety, and not only the five permanent members, the seven major industrial countries, or any country or organ in the world has the right alone to decide or take any other steps to implement this resolution and establish peace and stability. This means that in order for any U.S. plan dealing with a new military strike at Iraq needs international legitimacy and needs Security Council support. No other group can pass a resolution on such a plan.

Egypt adopted a sound and brave position when President Mubarak stated that Egypt would not participate in a new military strike against Iraq because the Egyptian Armed Forces task ended with the liberation of Kuwait.

There are millions of Arabs who are embittered with the U.S. nuclear weapon's double standards, which considers military action against Iraq because of nuclear installations or material and makes no decision whatsoever regarding Israel, even though it has nuclear arms

that support its occupation of parts of three Arab countries. With the war for the liberation of Kuwait, America won some Arab friends. It must not risk those gains by a new strike at Iraq.

Columnist Opposes Military Strikes Against Iraq

NC2007095791 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
16 Jul 91 p 6

[Salamah Ahmad Salamah "Closeup" column: "No to Attacking Iraq"]

[Text] There are not many in the Arab world who would challenge the statement that the continued presence of Saddam Husayn in power is a threat to Iraq and its people and a cause for increased foreign influence in the region.

Past events prove that foreign intervention in the region has increased and is about to become an established right. Foreign intervention is taking place under the pretext of implementing UN Security Council resolutions against Iraq. The United States, with constant British and occasional French support, has been urging the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and consequently the UN Security Council itself, to provide a cover of legitimacy for any military action that may be taken against Iraq.

What causes concern is that the method of military bombing that the United States is threatening to use against Iraq to force it to hand over its nuclear potential was unsuccessful in the past. U.S. planes failed to do the job during the Gulf war when they bombed sites suspected of housing nuclear or chemical facilities, and they cannot be expected to succeed now. The United States is basing its current campaign against Iraq on information provided by an Iraqi nuclear scientist who sold secrets on Iraqi nuclear activities to U.S. intelligence.

It is quite possible that Iraqi authorities hid these materials to keep them safe during the war. If the planned bombardment is unsuccessful again, the only other option would be to get rid of Saddam Husayn himself. The United States, however, does not want to assassinate Saddam or get rid of him right now for several reasons.

In this case, there is one option left: to intensify international inspection activities and increase pressure and threats until Saddam admits to whatever nuclear equipment and material he has. This would make strikes against Iraq unjustifiable because they only harm the people of Iraq who have been the real victims of Saddam's afflictions and allied bombing at the same time.

Saddam Husayn is now calling on the Arab League to intervene to protect him from the aggression the United States is planning. The irony that has escaped Saddam is that he is primarily responsible for undermining and weakening the Arab League. The Arabs are no longer in control of events, insofar as Iraq is concerned. The most that Arab countries can do is to minimize the extensive damage that has hit them and urge the Iraqi rulers to avert further destruction and starvation.

This somber picture must stay in the minds of those who will meet in Kuwait to agree, or disagree, on security arrangements in the Gulf.

Columnist Examines Bush's Policy Toward Iraq

NC2507084791 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
21 Jul 91 p 16

[Anis Mansur column: "Stands"]

[Text] President Bush certainly will not strike Saddam Husayn, nor will he achieve peace. He threatens to strike Saddam and promises to establish peace between the Arabs and Israel.

President Bush has succeeded in dealing with the Gulf crisis in an unprecedented manner. He has made no mistakes, not on the political, diplomatic, legal, or information level. He will go down in history as the ruler who most efficiently administered a world crisis and exploited it to his own benefit.

The U.S. forces were paid for fighting and U.S. engineers were paid for reconstruction. The companies rebuilding Kuwait are the same ones rebuilding Beirut, and they also will rebuild Iraq in the future.

All parties gained from the Gulf crisis. Israel alone made $1 billion for every frail missile that fell on it. We ask: Would the United States have been so generous if these missiles had fallen on another country? The answer is certainly no.

President Bush is a man of crucial and final decisions. He planned and succeeded in striking at Iraq. He failed, however, to plan for Kurdish autonomy. He is keeping the Kurds in the same situation for another 70 years. He will not strike Iraq because this time he might not hit the scientific targets. Therefore, he will leave this mission, which is his idea, to the United Nations. It is thus impossible for Butrus Ghali to become UN secretary general because he represents an Egyptian Arab side in the issue of peace between Israel and the Arabs. Ghali will be insulted by the Muslims and cursed by the Jews if he tries to adopt a clear-cut, courageous position.

President Bush does not favor issues that drag on during an election year and may affect the outcome of those elections. He killed 500,000 Iraqis and washed his hands of their blood, the blood of Kuwait, and the blood of the helpless Ambassador April Glaspie, whom he sacrificed because she failed to shout at Saddam Husayn and invited Saddam to strike Kuwait because America only defends Saudi Arabia.

Bush will abandon the war issue with Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinians because he and Shamir will be preoccupied with the upcoming elections, but the issue can wait for another 50 years.

U.S. Position on Saddam, Israel Criticized

NC1807102391 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 15 Jul 91 p 1

[Jamal Badawi editorial: "Wake Up, O Arabs, Before We Become Slaves of the Israelis"]

[Text] Let the United States know that its premeditated aggression against Iraq will not be received in the same way as its previous aggression in Desert Storm. Let the permanent members of the UN Security Council understand that the post-Gulf-war Arab peoples differ from those before the war. The Arab peoples were observers or supporters to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait after the Arab countries failed to take serious steps to check the recalcitrant Iraqi dictator and to halt his apparent advance on the other Gulf states.

The situation is now different, as is the justification for aggression. The support given to the foreign military presence will not be repeated but will turn into denunciation, rejection, and condemnation. This change in the Arab people's position is not the result of vacillating emotions, as the Arab character purportedly possesses, but the logical outcome of the U.S. course of action that is being unveiled day by day. It has become clear that the United States has double standards: It speaks about justice, while harboring injustice. It prattles on about legitimacy, when it really means the legitimacy of world domination and hegemony. The world order which President Bush espouses amounts to a U.S. monopoly of world rule, with Israel deputized to rule the Middle East and permitted to be the only power in the region with nuclear weapons, with the Middle East remaining a volatile region reeling under the burdens of anxiety, disturbances, and terrorism ,and with Saddam Husayn continuing to play the role of a "bogeyman" who frightens, threatens, and blackmails.

The U.S. forces under the command of General Schwarzkopf could have eliminated Saddam Husayn and spared the world his evil crimes. President Bush, however, opposed this for a ridiculous and silly reason: The United States does not wish to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs!

This is really a joke that makes one feel more like crying than laughing. The U.S. forces did not consider the destruction of Baghdad over the heads of its inhabitants to be interference in Iraq's internal affairs! The removal of Saddam Husayn is the big sin with which President Bush does not wish to blemish his country's honor! Thus, what is required is to let Saddam Husayn continue playing the ambiguous role of serving U.S. interests. It is a multifaceted and multipurpose role with a single aim. In the first stage, Saddam's task was to confront Iran and exhaust its forces following the Khomeyni revolution, despite the U.S. role in this revolution at the expense of the shah's regime. Saddam then ended his role by occupying Kuwait for no logical reason, except to create a justification for bringing in foreign forces. Today Saddam appears on stage wearing a new mask—that is, the issue of nuclear material—thereby signaling the United States to initiate new aggression against Iraq and destroy whatever financial or military resources it has left.

What was secret is now revealed, the intentions have become apparent, and the roles have been exposed. The Arab peoples must be aware of what is being plotted against them and be alert to the massacre toward which they are being led.

Having used Saddam Husayn at the start of the play, the United States is now using him in the final act before the curtain falls on the tragedy which leads to our becoming slaves of the Israelis.

U.S. 'Double Standards' on Disarmament Criticized

NC1707163391 Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 13 Jul 91 p 16

[Husayn Fahmi column: "Toward Tomorrow"]

[Text] In implementing President Bush's initiative to eliminate weapons pf mass destruction from the Middle East and in line with the UN campaign to remove such weapons from Iraq, the Iraqi Government handed a list of its nuclear material to the UN committee.

At the same time, experts from the Security Council's five permanent members met to draw up plans to limit the export of such weapons. The five members' statement stressed the need to make the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and demanded that these principles be equally applied to all states in the region.

This means that the U.S. initiative differs from that of the five states, which calls for imposing a freeze on surface-to-surface missiles as a prelude to eliminating them. The five states' initiative also calls on all the Middle East countries to have their nuclear weapons periodically inspected by the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA].

The difference between the two initiative is crystal clear. The European countries call for equal treatment of all the Middle East states, while the U.S. initiative makes no mention of this point. In other words, the U.S. initiative has two sets of criteria: one in dealing with the region's states, and the other with Israel. The U.S. initiative calls for eliminating nuclear material from Iraq without mentioning anything about Israel's possession of weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, chemical, and biological. The U.S. initiative did not even ask Israel to eliminate or disclose these weapons.

This indicates that Washington continues its biased policy toward Israel and tries to assert Israel's military superiority over the Arab countries, none of which possesses nulcear or other weapons of mass destruction. Meanwhile, Israel refuses to give up such weapons and also refuses to have these weapons periodically inspected

by the IAEA. Israel, reassured by the U.S. initiative and support, insists on receiving special treatment on all measures concerning the inspection and dismantling of weapons.

It is natural for Egypt to reject this monopolistic, special treatment and to support the five members' statement on inspection and dismantling of weapons. Furthermore, there is a wide gap between the U.S. proposals and those made by the five members, despite the fact the United States is one of the five. The United States is maintaining its position and trying to deceive international public opinion at the same time. This contradiction means the United States is using double standards. It has one set of criteria for Israel and another for the Arab countries, particularly Iraq. Such policy can only lead to an escalation of the nuclear arms race in the Middle East and further obstruct a just, comprehensive, and peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

AL-AKHBAR Contrasts EC, U.S. Policies

NC1407080191 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0335 GMT 14 Jul 91

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-AKHBAR in its editorial today comments on the positive European position regarding Israel. The paper says the EC has warned Israel it will not receive preferential treatment or be incorporated in wider cooperation plans when Europe is unified next year unless peace is achieved between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

According to the editorial, French President Francois Mitterrand says his country supports international legitimacy and believes it should be applied to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Lebanese problem.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi held talks with the EC commissioner to seek EC preferential trade terms. The EC, however, made it clear that the answer to Israel's request will be linked primarily to the achievement of full peace with the Arabs.

Expressing similar views, UK Prime Minister John Major has called on Israeli leaders to cooperate with the international efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East.

AL-AKHBAR says the European position on the Middle East has been consistent for years. Europe's position is clearer and more committed to the principles of international law and the UN Charter than the U.S. position, the paper concludes.

Columnist Deplores 'Arab Silence' on U.S. Policy

NC2007114591 Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 17 Jul 91 p 56

[Hamid Sulayman column: "The Americans' Disdain and the Arabs' Silence"]

[Text] The question which provokes the wrath and surprise of every Arab and causes us pain now is why Bush gets so enthusiastic about destroying Arab nuclear power and completely ignores the Israeli atomic arsenal. Why does he roar in the face of Arab nuclear centers, which were not used during the Gulf war, and behave like an ostrich when there is a talk about Israel's atomic bombs? Why does he move like a rocket toward Arab research centers and orders strikes on 20 of them and why does he leave Israel's atomic bombs to threaten all the Arabs?

In my opinion, all these questions revolve around the problem, but they fail to deal with its essence. The unasked question is: Why are all the Arab governments—from the ocean to the Gulf—silent about the destruction of the nucleus of a possible Arab power, and why do they not stipulate that if any action is carried out against Arab bombs, that a similar simultaneous action be taken against Israeli atomic power?

All hypocrites who may get agitated and claim that this talk favors Saddam and his camp should remember what I have written against Saddam. In my opinion, Saddam is still the feeble-minded man who gave Israel and the West the opportunity to dominate our destinies.

Condemning Saddam is one thing, and keeping silent on the destruction of an Arab nuclear power—without the destruction of Israel's atomic arsenal—is another. This is political impudence unprecedented in international politics practiced by the United States and the West against the Arabs, and precisely against those who believe that "the foreign hegemony" led by the United States is a fate that cannot be confronted or eliminated. These people should wake up. They must understand that if an Arab League emergency meeting were held and said it rejected this U.S. bias and stressed the need to link the destruction of any Arab nuclear power with the destruction of Israel's nuclear weapons, it could create a crack in the allied front. Then, they must imagine the magnitude of the U.S. retreat.

Therefore, the disease does not rest in Bush's disdain nor does it rest in the viciousness, harshness, or treason of the U.S. position. The disease lies in Arab silence and submissiveness, which encourages everyone to ignore our rights and subject the fate of well over 200 million Arabs to the danger of living under Israeli nuclear horror and under a nuclear domination of a historic enemy who bears destructive hatred and grudges. There is no power and no strength save in God.

Columnist Views Mubarak's Proposal on Israel

NC2507092491 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0335 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Under the headline "Settlements and Boycott," Salamah Ahmad Salamah, in his column on page 6 in AL-AHRAM, writes: President Husni Mubarak has proposed that Israel should stop building settlements in

return for ending the Arab economic boycott of Israel. Most Arab countries welcomed the proposal, but Israel firmly rejected it.

Salamah says: Mubarak's proposal was made at a crucial time for the peace efforts and in recognition of two matters: On the one hand, the continued building of Israeli settlements in the heart of the occupied territories is detrimental to the very purpose of negotiations between the Arabs and Israel. The settlement activities constitute a flagrant aggression against the rights of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza. On the other hand, Israel itself has for years considered the Arab economic boycott an act of war and aggression.

Salamah adds: If one were to admit Israel's claim that Arab economic boycott is an act of war and aggression, then one must also admit that seizing Arab land by force and changing its nature by building settlements for new immigrants constitutes a more serious and more direct form of aggression. The Arab boycott, after all, is nothing but a passive reaction to confront Israel's unbridled expansionism and brutal, unceasing repressive measures.

The columnist adds: Israel totally rejected Mubarak's proposal, saying that there is no link between building settlements and the end of the Arab boycott of Israel, and that the issue of settlements should be discussed during the negotiations. It is clear that Israel wants a reward for halting its hostile policy of building settlements but wishes to give nothing in return for ending the Arab boycott. Economic boycotts are legitimate international measures used in many international conflicts. Why should Israel be treated better than South Africa? The international community did not lift sanctions on the latter until it made a positive move to end apartheid, Salamah notes.

AL-AHRAM Urges End of Anti-Iraq Sanctions

NC2007084791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2021 GMT 19 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 19 Jul (MENA)—In its 20 July edition, AL-AHRAM's editorial discusses lifting the economic blockade on Iraq. The paper urges the United Nations to agree to a partial lifting so that Iraq can export some oil and avert famine and epidemics, the signs of which have begun to appear.

The paper notes that some estimates say the cost of living in Iraq has doubled several times and the prices of some foodstuffs have increased seventy fold. In addition, the value of the Iraqi dinar in the free market has dropped drastically, causing a price increase in imported materials in terms of local currency. What this means is that even if Iraq could import some needed items, the people could not afford them.

The paper notes that Iraq has requested permission to export $1.5 billion worth of oil and that Iraq is depending on some oil trapped in the pipeline between the Karkuk oil fields and Turkish ports. It also points out that Iraq has reached an initial agreement with Turkey to allow the export of this oil if the UN Security Council approves.

AL-AHRAM says the basic problem is that the United States and Britain refuse to lift the embargo—even partially. The issue of deducting a certain percentage of Iraq's oil revenues for a war reparations fund established by the Security Council and how this will be implemented is another important issue. The paper concludes by saying that regardless of what happens, the first step is to lift the sanctions.

Editorial Urges UN To Lift Blockade on Iraq

NC2007080691 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 17 Jul 91 p 7

[Editorial: "Lifting the Blockade on Iraq"]

[Text] The Iraqi foreign minister recently warned the United Nations that continuing the economic blockade against his country will result in inevitable human catastrophe. Although the Iraqi regime bears a great responsibility for the hardships suffered by the Iraqi people, the Iraqi people are, after all, an Arab people. In view of Egypt's leading position in the Arab homeland, we believe that continuing this blockade has become inhumane, particularly because Iraq was compelled to implement the UN Security Council resolutions following its defeat in the war. Furthermore, the Iraqi people, who live under a despotic regime, cannot be held responsible for the regime's sins.

The total embargo imposed on Iraq is unprecedented and its continuation is unacceptable, particularly because Israel carries out atrocities greater than Iraq's but is not subject to punishment. Israel occupies Palestinian and Arab territories, refuses to implement UN Security Council and UN resolutions, produces nuclear weapons, refuses to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, rejects international inspection of its nuclear installations, and practices the barbaric repression of the Palestinian intifadah. In spite of all this, it receives nothing but economic and military aid and technical and technological cooperation from the international community. How can this be right?

It has become necessary to lift the economic blockade on Iraq for the sake of its people. If there really is the need for such a blockade, the international community should impose it on other countries, such as Israel, to force it to recognize international legitimacy just as it did with Iraq.

Israel's Last Chance To End Boycott Examined

NC2207075391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2132 GMT 21 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Cairo, 21 Jul (MENA)—The editorials of tomorrow's Cairo newspapers will deal with President Husni Mubarak's initiative to end the Arab economic

boycott of Israel if it stops building settlements in the occupied Arab territories, the Shamir government's negative position on the peace efforts, and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's fifth tour of the region, which is taking place following Syria's positive response to the American peace initiative.

AL-AKHBAR's editorial entitled "A Chance for Israel That May Not Be Repeated" describes President Mubarak's initiative as a "stroke of a genius" that no Israeli leader can ignore because it affects the public welfare of a state suffering from the effects of the Arab-imposed boycott since its establishment.

The paper says that the Israeli leaders must carefully think things through before they reject President Mubarak's proposal, because they realize more than anyone else what ending the Arab boycott could mean for a state that cannot stand on its own feet without huge amounts of economic aid.

AL-AKHBAR notes that one of the original aims of the Jewish state's founders was to utilize the markets of the neighboring Arab states, which at that time did not have any significant industries. The decision for the boycott destroyed these hopes.

In conclusion, the paper says that President Mubarak is offeraing Israeli leaders an opportunity that may not be repeated, especially considering that they will not be able to benefit from the end of the Arab economic boycott unless genuine peace prevails between the two sides and peaceful coexistence replaces the enmity which has existed for nearly half a century. [passage omitted]

In an editorial entitled "The Required U.S. Action," AL-AHRAM says that the time has come for the U.S. Administration to take positive steps to begin the peace process.

The paper says that Egypt and Syria's positive moves on the peace efforts have put the U.S. Administration to a real test: Either it will play all its cards to prompt Israel to abandon its intransigence, or the entire process will stop; the possibilities of peace will recede; and the door will open to other ways of solving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

AL-AHRAM affirms that the politically and militarily effective Arab states have displayed all the flexibility possible in response to U.S. demands and cannot give anything more in this regard.

The paper says the United States must now make an effort to prompt Israel to embark on the peace process; otherwise, it will lose its international credibility as a party that can politically manage the Arab-Israeli conflict. The future of the peace process will determine the nature of the new world order and the position of the United States.

AL-AHRAM Analyst Comments on BCCI Collapse

NC1807070791 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 13 Jul 91 p 9

[Usamah Ghayth analysis: "The Bankruptcy of a Bank or a Pursuit of the Arab Banks?"]

[Excerpts] Banks go bankrupt just like other economic establishments. In any economic enterprise, the consequences of bankruptcy are borne primarily by the capital investors. When an establishment declares bankruptcy and is liquidated, the proceeds are distributed among the shareholders. They receive part of the proceeds according to the percentage of shares they hold.

With insolvent banks, however, there are special guarantees in force. The banks' obligations to their depositors are greater than other obligations involved. Furthermore, a major part of the deposits are automatically covered by insurance companies. This system, which exists in most advanced economies, is not only meant to protect the interests of depositors, but to protect banking transactions and avoid upheavals which could destroy confidence in the banking system. [passage omitted]

The recent bankruptcy of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI] is not surprising because this is not the first bank to fail. What is troubling, however, is that the BCCI is huge in terms of transactions, branches, capital, and size of investments. What also is of concern is that this bank is owned primarily by Arabs. The Abu Dhabi government owns 77 percent of the bank's capital. The majority of depositors are Arabs, particularly Egyptians who work in the Gulf states.

What worries BCCI depositors is the fact the majority of deposits were uninsured, the bank's losses are huge, and fraudulent operations were widespread. [passage omitted]

The strange and astonishing point about the bank's collapse was that its losses could have been settled. The majority of its capital is owned by a government, not individuals, and this government was engaged in intensive negotiations with European states—led by Britain—to make a joint bank with a British firm part of its operations. This would provide Abu Dhabi and other Gulf states access to international markets. At the same time there were secret negotiations with U.S. parties to buy the bank, which also would provide Arab capital with access to American markets. The sudden suspension of the bank's operations, however, and the subsequent action that may lead to its bankruptcy makes these possibilities puzzling.

The time has come for a serious and frank discussion of the situation of Arab banks in Europe and the United States, as well as banks in which Arab capital leads other sources. This is because all these banks are being subjected to a series of liquidations and declarations of bankruptcy, or at least the transfer of their complete control to non-Arab parties. It seems that what is

involved is an attempt to scare off Arab capital, liquidate it, diminish Arab participation and activity in international banking, and to declare certain areas off limits to Arab activities. Related to this are arguments that the Arabs have no financial talents and therefore should not invest in or own financial and banking institutions. [passage omitted]

What happened to the Arab funds in the BCCI can provide a useful lesson to Egyptian capital lingering at the doors of many banks of dubious credibility. The current and future losses of such banks are anyone's guess, particularly as the banks come under various kinds of pressure and ill will.

This leaves us with the issue of the Bank of Credit and Commerce in Egypt. It is an Egyptian establishment, because Egypt owns most of its capital and, as an independent establishment, it comes under the control of the Central Bank of Egypt. Its operations and transactions are independent of the BCCI. In view of the independence of its credit system, the decision to freeze its foreign transactions is an international banking precedence that calls for intensive action to rectify it and ensure that it is not repeated. It also is necessary to change the bank's name in Egypt so it may regain clients' trust. The bank should undergo radical reform. It is known that banks in Egypt are not allowed to go bankrupt, but their insurance against bankruptcy is costly. This makes it necessary to keep a constantly vigilant eye on them.

Higher Council for Islamic Call Established

NC2007153491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1455 GMT 20 Jul 91

[Text] Al-Mansurah, Delta, 20 Jul (MENA)—It has been decided to establish a Higher Council for Islamic Call [Majlis A'la li al-Da'wah al-Islamiyah] in Egypt under the chairmanship of His Eminence Shaykh Jad al-Haq 'Ali Jad al-Haq, grand imam of al-Azhar. Council members will also include the minister of awqaf, the president and vice president of al-Azhar University, the mufti of the republic, and the secretary general of the Higher Council for Islamic Affairs.

Awqaf Minister Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub announced this today in the town of Jamsah at a news conference which was also attended by Mustafa Kamil, al-Daqahliyah governor.

Dr. Mahjub said that the decision to set up the council was made at President Husni Mubarak's instructions. He added that the council will draw up a unified plan for all institutions active in the field of Islamic call under the al-Azhar leadership.

Kuwait

Minister Discusses Foreign Policy, Iraqi Actions

LD2407172791 London KUNA in Arabic 1233 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 24 Jul (KUNA)—Shaykh Salim al-Sabah al-Salim, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, affirmed that Kuwaiti foreign policy "will not change in its essentials," pointing out that the Palestinian cause "is Kuwait's cause, with the exception of that there is another angle of dealing." Shaykh Salim says in an interview with SAWT AL-KUWAIT, published here today: "We believe in the Arab League and in our Arab belonging, and we believe in the Islamic Organisation and the United Nations and its principles. Issues continue to be raised in the arena every now and then on which stands must be taken." Answering a question on the PLO's biased media campaign on Kuwait abroad, Shaykh Salim said: "We do not descend to the level of lies and abuse. We are loftier than these issues." He emphasized that, from this starting point, "this PLO position will not affect Kuwait's support for the Palestinian cause. The PLO is one thing; the Palestinian cause is another". The Salim also said: "When we find quarters deserving a response, such as the Arab League and the United Nations, we respond scientifically, with facts." Shaykh Salim discussed the Damascus Declaration (which included the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Egypt, and Syria), emphasizing: "These countries believe in the Damascus Declaration's basic principles and are prepared to provide us with any number of forces we request to help the Gulf and Kuwaiti forces protect Kuwait." He expressed his regret over international press reports on postponing the meeting of the eight countries which met recently in Kuwait, saying the press "must not exaggerate the issues. I ask that they not overburden it." Shaykh Salim noted there are three principle issues requiring solutions, including: the prisoners, the borders, and the stolen goods. As for the prisoners' issue, he affirmed anew that Kuwait will continue to pressure the vicious Iraqi regime for the sake of releasing all the detained prisoners in Iraq. He said: "We will not feel comfortable until all our prisoners return safely." As for the stolen goods, Shaykh Salim said: "Iraq agreed to return all stolen goods, but continues to procrastinate in that it is not specifying a date to deliver them. We will continue to pressure the United Nations until Iraq surrenders all the stolen goods." As for the border issue, he pointed out that a meeting will be held on 12 August. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on whether Iraq would ever dare stage another aggression on Kuwait, Shaykh Salim said: "Iraq cannot move a finger, and its true intentions have practically been revealed".

Council Issues Statement Supporting Government

LD2407204891 London KUNA in Arabic 1820 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Kuwait, 24 Jul (KUNA)—Today, the Kuwaiti National Council announced its support and consolidation for government measures to achieve Kuwait's supreme interest, given the serious circumstances the country is going through, following its liberation from Iraqi occupation. This came in a council statement following a special private session chaired by council Speaker 'Abd al-Aziz al-Masa'id, which was attended by His Highness Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, who dwelt upon the government's domestic and foreign policies. This session was devoted to internal and external security issues, as well as government measures in this respect. The communique pointed out that council members discussed every point in the government's statement, i.e. issues and matters concering the citizen and the homeland. His highness the heir apparent and the prime minister answered questions in a frank and objective atmosphere, a matter that epitomizes concern for the need to take measures guaranteeing Kuwait's supreme interest. Furthermore, the Council affirmed there is no alternative to achieving national goals except through the cohesion and intersupport of everyone under the leadership of his highness the amir and His Highness Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Kuwaiti Amir's Letter

LD2407220491 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1615 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Jeddah, 24 Jul (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, may God keep him safe, received a letter from his brother, His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, amir of the sister state of Kuwait. The letter was delivered to the custodian of the two holy mosques—may God be with him—by His Excellency 'Abd al-Rahman al-Salim al-'Atiqi, adviser to his highness the amir of the state of Kuwait, at his Al-Salam Palace office today. The meeting was attended by His Excellency Ibrahim al-'Anqari, personal adviser to the custodian of the two holy mosques, and Ibrahim al-Mansur, Kuwaiti consul general in Jeddah. 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Atiqi arrived in Jeddah earlier today, where he was welcomed at King 'Abd-al-'Aziz International Airport by His Excellency Ibrahim al-'Anqari, a representative of royal protocol, and the Kuwaiti consul general in Jeddah.

Council To Hold Secret Ballot Elections 'Soon'

NC2407204691 Paris AFP in English 2019 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, July 24 (AFP) - Iraq's ruling Ba'th Party will hold elections soon for the Revolutionary Command Council [RCC], the country's supreme governing body, the Iraqi weekly ALIF-BA' reported Wednesday. Quoting Iraqi parliamentary speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih, the review said that the new members of the Revolutionary Command Council "will be elected by a secret direct ballot." Mr. Mahdi Salih added that the new council could include both current members and additions.

The 17-member body is chaired by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

The party, which counts some 1.75 million members, has been changing its bureaucracy in preparation for a promised shift to a multi-party system.

Saddam With Ba'thists Discusses Party Life, War

JN2407150491 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Comrade leader Saddam Husayn, secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command, received several veteran comrade Ba'thist strugglers who took part in the party's march during the phases of clandestine and public activities.

Comrade leader Saddam Husayn spoke to these comrades about the great showdown our people and their valiant Armed Forces waged in the mother of battles war and about the circumstances preceding, accompanying, and following this war.

The comrade leader also talked to this select group of strugglers about the party's internal life and the revolution's ambitions for the great Iraqi people, which are commensurate with their greatness and the sacrifices they made in the great battles of struggle.

Several of the comrade strugglers spoke during the audience given to them by comrade Saddam Husayn, expressing their opinions on the political, social, and economic spheres within the framework of democratic practice. They also touched on the assessment and activation of party life.

The meeting was attended by Muhammad [name indistinct], director of the office of the Regional Command's Secretariat, and comrade Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi.

'Urgent' Messages Sent on 'Threats,' Blockade

JN2507073291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0655 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Jul (INA)—The Foreign Relations Bureau of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party's Regional Command has urged Arab and friendly parties, organizations and federations to expose the dangerous dimensions of the threats being launched by the U.S. Administration against Iraq.

In urgent messages addressed to Arab and friendly parties and organizations, the Foreign Relations Bureau called for adopting a unified stance to lift the unjust economic blockade on the Iraqi people.

Furthermore, it explained in these messages the objectives of the 30-state aggression and its attempts to undermine Iraq's capability, target its national unity, and interfere in its domestic affairs.

Kuwait Accused of Blocking Return of Prisoners

JN2407193291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1849 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Jul (INA)—Iraq today accused Kuwaiti authorities of blocking the return of Kuwaitis imprisoned or detained in Iraq on the pretext that they have not completed their scrutiny of these detainees.

In a statement to INA, a responsible Foreign Ministry source said that Kuwaiti authorities are blocking the return of the Kuwaitis at a time when they are alleging that Iraq is refusing to release the Kuwaitis detained in Iraq.

The source added that between 4 March and 14 July this year, Iraqi authorities have returned 6,333 Kuwaiti civilian detainees to Kuwait under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC].

The source went on to say: In addition, an ICRC mission registered 3,400 Kuwaitis who are part of 606 families present in Iraq. However, the Kuwaiti side only agreed to repatriate 128 of them. It is attempting to delude the Arab and world public into believing that Iraq is forcibly holding a large number of Kuwaitis in custody.

Envoy Informed of UN Approval To Sell Oil

JN2407112691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1052 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] United Nations, 24 Jul (INA)—Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, executive envoy of the UN secretary general, met with Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations, at the headquarters of the Iraqi mission in New York last night.

Ambassador al-Anbari told the INA correspondent in New York that the meeting took place at the request of Prince Sadruddin before he left New York for his Geneva office.

He added that the UN official reviewed the efforts he had made over the two past days as well as his meetings with the UN Sanctions Committee and the ambassadors of the five permanent member states of the Security Council.

Ambassador al-Anbari added that Prince Sadruddin informed him officially that he had made great progress and that it had been approved in principle to allow Iraq to sell part of its oil to cover its needs for foodstuffs and medicine as well to be able to repair water, electricity, and sewage systems.

After his meeting with Ambassador al-Anbari, Prince Sadruddin left for Geneva.

UN Nuclear Inspection Team Activities Detailed

JN2407201491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1910 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Jul (INA)—It was announced here today that the fourth international inspection team will arrive in Iraq on Saturday for a two-week visit.

The INA scientific affairs editor asked a responsible Foreign Ministry source about the upcoming visit of the international nuclear inspection team and the results of the previous nuclear inspection team's visit. His answer was as follows:

The fourth international nuclear inspection team will arrive in Iraq on 27 July 1991. It will be made up of 15 to 20 persons. The team will stay in Iraq for two weeks, during which it will complete the work begun by the third team, which departed Iraq on 19 July 1991. The work of the third team began when Iraq issued a total disclosure of its nuclear program. The team's work was divided between four groups.

The source indicated that the first group was the one tasked with making an inventory of the nuclear material. A large part of the nuclear material was located in the installations and laboratories that were bombed. The situation was very difficult for the Iraqi technicians. The military forces were busy trying to locate the unexploded bombs and detonating those whose explosion was deemed necessary. Meanwhile, firefighters were doing their work. Amid these hazardous circumstances, the technicians had to make exceptional efforts to salvage the nuclear material and spare them any damage or loss. The international group made an inventory of these materials, and stamped them after having ascertained their type. The new team is expected to scrutinize the amount of this nuclear material.

The source also touched on the second group; namely, the site inspection group. The source said that this group visited the 'Akashat site and acquainted itself with the phosphate mines and the al-Qa'im plant for the production of fertilizers and yellow salt. Then, the group visited al-Sharqat, which was an alternate for the al-Tarmiyah complex, and has now become a site affiliated with the projects of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals. Afterward, the group went to Mosul and inspected the uranium refinery plant there. The group made surprise inspections more than once. Its inspection was conducted quietly and without ado. It obtained all the information it requested.

As for the third group—the reactors group—the source said: The mission of this group was to inspect the fuel of the 14 July reactor, still inside the reactor under the debris. The group discussed with the Iraqi side an operation to save the fuel.

On the mission of the enrichment group, which is the fourth group, the Foreign Ministry official source said: The group was acquainted with both sound and destroyed enrichment equipment at their various sites. It also visited the al-Tarimiyah [as received] complex.

The source added: The Iraqi side has provided all facilities and shown full cooperation. Its goal was to enable the international team to understand the truth of the Iraqi nuclear program and its motives, contrary to the lies and false fabrications being propagated about it.

The source added: Although the demands of the international team were numerous and multifarious, the Iraqi side made exceptional efforts and worked even during religious and national holidays to meet its demands.

The source explained: The international experts and scientists have been fully and extensively familiarized with the methods of enrichment used by Iraqi scientists. They also discussed small details and equations.

On the nature of the discussions that were held between this group and Iraqi scientists, the source said: Despite differences in views, assessments, and interpretations, the discussions were fruitful and positive. The entire issue was moved from its strained, unfounded political domain to a calm scientific domain that is far from premeditated intentions and preconceptions. It is hoped that this scientific atmosphere will continue to be observed with the members of the fourth team, which will begin its activities as of 27 July 1991. This team will complete the field visits to the sites and plants that the third team could not visit due to lack of time.

Envoy Stresses Cooperation With Inspection Team

JN2507050591 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 0300 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's permanent representative at the United Nations, has said that the continuation of the economic blockade against the Iraqi people shows that many countries lack credibility, and violates the UN Charter. In a statement to the U.S. Cable News Network yesterday, he said those who talk about the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty do not know much about it. The treaty, he explained, provides for inspection of only enriched uranium used to make nuclear weapons. He stressed that Iraq's nuclear program is meant for peaceful purposes.

Dr. al-Anbari said Iraq has fully cooperated with the UN inspection team. He asked: Why was Israel not accused when its involvement in the smuggling of 12 tonnes of uranium in Luxembourg was discovered? Concluding his statement, Dr. al-Anbari stressed the need for the United

States and the other Western countries to respect the UN resolutions and the human rights of the Iraqi people.

Kurdish Radio Reports 'Unjustified' Shelling

NC2407193491 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1712 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] On 22 July, Iraqi forces deployed in the area of (Sami al-Wathman) near Dukan district shelled the area around (Kafrat) mountain without justification whatsoever.

The shelling caused mountainous fields and meadows to catch fire, causing great damage.

Our correspondent in the area did not report human casualties.

This incident is another unjustified violation of the current truce by the authorities and in no way serves the efforts being made to ease tension in the Kurdish areas and to achieve a final agreement to solve the Kurdish problem in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Harming Iraq Said 'Cornerstone' of Iranian Plan

JN2507082591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0620 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 25 Jul (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH says Iraq, which has received treacherous stabs from the Iranian regime, must necessarily be vigilant and distrustful toward the hostile policy of this regime.

In its editorial today, the paper says events and developments proved that the policy of harming Iraq and its people is a cornerstone of Iran's policy. The Iranian regime cannot rid itself of the complex of its bitter defeat in the eight-year war, nor will it be removed from—if not directly and publicly involved in—the coming chapters of the U.S. conspiracy.

The paper adds: As far as Iraq and the Arab nation are concerned, the Iranian regime has completely lost its credibility. Added to this regime's ugly practices in the past and the present, this gives legitimate reason for vigilance and skepticism about this regime's policy. This is necessary to protect Iraq's national security and spare the Iraqis further harm and bloodshed at the hands of this regime, as happened during the treacherous chapter involving hiring agents and demagogues, and the chapter of riots in al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil, let alone the inhumane, unethical, and completely illegal conduct concerning Iraqi prisoners of war. [passage omitted]

Ramadan Addresses Eritrean Labor Delegation

JN2107124291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0800 GMT 21 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Jul (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council and vice president, has hailed the great victory of Eritrean revolutionaries who gained independence after a 30-year struggle during which they offered huge sacrifices.

At a meeting with an Eritrean labor delegation, headed by Idris Abu-Rashid, head of the Eritrean Workers Union, Taha Yasin Ramadan said the victory of the Eritrean revolutionaries is an eloquent lesson on the peoples' struggle for their independence and freedom, and is a defeat for all methods of colonialism and aggression. The victory also emphasizes the strength and nobility of the Arabs and their readiness to be martyred for the sake of their objectives and dignity.

The vice president emphasized that the Arab nation is strong through its revolutionary sons who have been brought up on the love of martyrdom in defense of their existence, and who are proud of their defiance of the aggressors who gathered to commit aggression on Iraq in a desperate attempt to undermine the revolutionary spirit and fighting morale that fills the hearts of the free sons of Arabism all over the Arab homeland.

The head of the Eritrean Workers Union hailed President Saddam Husayn's leadership which has become a model for the courageous Arab leaders and a source of pride for all honorable Arabs who are strongly resisting the enemies and adhering to their rights to land, resources, and sovereignty, stressing that defeat will be the fate of agents and traitors and their masters and that victory will be the lot of the Arab nation.

Shamir Interviewed on Peace Prospects

TA2407193091 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1840 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Yoram Ronen and political correspondent Gadi Sukenik, in Shamir's office—live]

[Text] [Ronen] Good evening, Mr. Prime Minister.

[Shamir] Good evening.

[Ronen] Good evening to you, too, my colleague Gadi Sukenik.

Mr. Prime Minister, first of all, do you view the move that is expected to lead to peace talks between Israel and the Arab countries as irreversible or unstoppable? Are we at a point of no return, or might there still be obstacles that could torpedo or imperil this move?

[Shamir] It is too early to venture such far-reaching assessments. Still, something has happened in the Middle East in the last few days. Although the time for peace has not yet come, and I would not venture to tell our friends that swords can already be converted into plowshares, nevertheless something positive has happened as regards the chances for peace.

[Ronen] You mean with al-Asad?

[Shamir] Something happened with the Syrian president. The most vociferous and extremist opponent of direct bilateral negotiations with Israel has recently decided to change his views radically and is now suggesting—though to date he has uttered this offer only to the U.S. President—launching direct bilateral negotiations with Israel without preconditions. This is the novelty. As to his thoughts, intentions, or plans that he is linking to this move—that we will see in the future.

[Ronen] Did you not hear about this from James Baker during his visit here?

[Shamir] James Baker has his own assessment, which is very common in the body politic, namely that Syrian President al-Asad has finally reached his conclusion thanks to his analysis of the international situation in the world in general and the situation in the region in particular. He has realized that he can no longer rely on the USSR to serve as his prop, that the United States is the only superpower, and that it is with the United States that he must work and cooperate. That is why he thought it necessary to tread the path of negotiations with Israel. That is the path that might pay off better than any other he knew.

[Sukenik] Mr. Shamir, do you believe President al-Asad?

[Shamir] It is not a question of belief. Clearly this is a far-reaching tactical move. He obviously thought, and still thinks, that he will gain from it. I maintain that Israel may take notice of this change in President al-Asad with satisfaction, as this has been Israel's position all these years: We demanded it, while the Arabs rejected it. Suddenly they come to us, offering this to us. After all, why should we all these years stand and beg, asking the Arabs to be good enough to conduct negotiations with us? Now one of them, an important one, comes and offers this course of action. I believe we must rise to the challenge, although after a thorough and careful inspection of the situation around it, review all the terms, and insist on our interests. Still, if anyone in Syria thought we would be confounded by this announcement, he was wrong. We have not been!

[Sukenik] Why, then, are you not saying yes, in principle, in reply to Mr. Baker's question?

[Shamir] We said that on this issue we are prepared to go to direct negotiations, but there are other issues around it; there is a whole package, as they say. After all, we are talking here about negotiations with the entire Arab world—the Arab countries and the Palestinian population, which will join the negotiations together with Jordan. Involved also is a series of actions: an opening ceremony, and then direct and totally bilateral negotiations between Israel and every Arab country without the participation of any foreign element. Later we will have to see how far we have gone and where we are going.

[Ronen] It seems to me that there is an agreement between us and the United States on matters of principle, such as the opening of a peace conference in a ceremony, followed—as you said—by direct negotiations with each of the Arab countries. It is still not clear to me why you refuse to respond in the affirmative to President Bush and Secretary of State Baker and leave all the procedural matters to a later stage.

[Shamir] They know precisely what is acceptable to us and what we still do not accept. We agree to engage in direct, bilateral negotiations with every Arab element, as we said. Nonetheless, some components of this package are still missing. For instance, certain matters concerning the Palestinian issue have not yet been finalized. This is a very important subject in this entire package. It is not yet clear how the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation will be formed, and all the conditions surrounding this.

[Ronen] I believe Yasir 'Arafat himself said, as did Faysal al-Husayni, that the Americans, or James Baker, had informed them in no uncertain terms that Israel objects to Arabs from East Jerusalem being represented on the Palestinian delegation, thereby making this an impossibility.

[Shamir] True, but they have not....

[Ronen, interrupting] In that case, what is the problem?

[Shamir] They have not accepted that for the moment, which is why there is no Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. We know, after all, that this entire move or process will not begin before all the parties agree to participate in it. You know what? I am prepared to negotiate only with

Syria or with any other Arab country separately. I do not have to have this entire group.

[Sukenik] Would that be possible without the Palestinians?

[Shamir] From my point of view, yes.

[Sukenik] But as far as peace is concerned?

[Shamir] In that sense it is a different story, but we have always said that we are prepared to conduct negotiations with every Arab country. They do not necessarily have to come as a group, but here we were given an offer. It is not necessarily a new one, after all, Shultz raised it back in 1987, four years ago, and we accepted it even then. We accept it today as well, but it requires preparation and work, without any rash moves, without exaggeration. It is necessary to get down to business.

[Ronen] It is still unclear, Mr. Prime Minister, what has changed with you, who until not too long ago said that the Arabs are the same Arabs and the sea is the same sea, while today al-Asad is no longer the same al-Asad?

[Shamir] I never said that; you said that, my friend. I said what al-Asad says, and he says that he is prepared to engage in direct, bilateral negotiations. Fine, then. I accept the challenge, and I am coming. If he wants to test me, we will test him.

[Ronen] Has he not changed?

[Shamir] I do not know.

[Sukenik] Is all of this based on....

[Shamir, interrupting] Time will tell.

[Sukenik] Mr. Shamir, is all of this based on the information James Baker brought with him, or are there things in this context that you know but of which we are not aware?

[Shamir] Look, naturally things are becoming clearer. Obviously, however, the first thing we noticed was the fact that the United States announced that it had received a message from President al-Asad in which he said this. Then the U.S. secretary of state came here, and he presented this picture to us. This leads us to understand that the state of affairs is such. We will be able to ascertain whether this is true; things will become clearer. Nowadays, secrets cannot be kept for long.

[Sukenik] Do we, or you, have additional information on what is happening in Syria, indicating changes? After all, they are still procuring weapons.

[Shamir] Look, even if I do know, I will not share this knowledge with anyone [laughs], but let us wait and see. I say: We are risking absolutely nothing; we are not risking anything. Let us sit down and talk. After all, we are not concealing our stands.

[Ronen] Mr. Shamir, yesterday you compared President al-Asad's move—in terms of its dramatic nature—to that of President al-Sadat when he made his offer and came to Jerusalem. Why should you not, pursuant to this dramatic move, invite President al-Asad to come to Jerusalem and talk?

[Shamir] First of all, as regards the comparison, I would like to explain: There are differences, and similarities, between al-Sadat's and al-Asad's characters and moves. Both shared the same point of departure, namely that the United States is the superpower with which they must work and cooperate. This was al-Sadat's starting point, and it is presently also al-Asad's. But beyond that, there is a difference between the two. Al-Sadat's move began with an appeal to Israel, not to the United States. He appealed to Israel and came to Jerusalem and the Knesset, where he told the people of Israel: I want peace with you; I understand your security problems. Al-Asad has to date not said as much. He appealed first of all to the United States, and this has not changed to this very moment. He has not talked about peace at all; I have not yet heard him say that he desires peace with Israel. He talks about resolving the conflict, but the two are not the same.

[Ronen] But al-Sadat knew quite clearly that then Prime Minister Menahem Begin was ready to effect a substantial withdrawal from the Sinai. I am not sure you will show similar readiness to say, or even hint, before the talks begin, that there would be any withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

[Shamir] Look, I do not know what al-Sadat knew; I was not privy to all that at the time. But today I know, as al-Asad's representatives say, that they are not asking Israel for any commitment or pledge regarding the Golan Heights. Besides, even if they did ask for it, that will not help [laughs]; our position is clear and known to all.

[Sukenik] But the Arabs' and the Americans' position is also well known....

[Shamir, interrupting] Correct.

[Sukenik] They do not recognize the annexation of the Golan and they advocate the principle of territory for peace. So is there anything to talk about, or is this merely a tactical move?

[Shamir] Look, what do you mean by tactics? Negotiations are always tactical, but, you know, sometimes you get to the real business at hand in a roundabout way. That happens sometimes. In many cases in the political world, two or three elements come to negotiations, each holding a different view from the others'. Well then, perhaps an exchange of letters specifying each side's position would have sufficed, but no; they go ahead and engage in negotiations. The whole world, and everyone in Israel, knows what the Israeli Government's position on the Golan Heights is. Still, if they want to negotiate with us—fine.

[Ronen] What will there be to negotiate? You said that it is the Israeli Government's well-known stand that the Golan Heights is an integral part of the State of Israel according to the law....

[Shamir, interrupting and laughing] You put it very well.

[Ronen] ...endorsed by the Knesset 10 years ago, while the explicit Syrian stand is that the Golan Heights is an inseparable part of Syria.

[Shamir] Right.

[Ronen] Is this not a sure recipe for blowing up the talks from the first minute?

[Shamir] But they have suggested talks nevertheless! It means there are other issues that need to be discussed.

[Ronen] Such as?

[Shamir] There is a need to discuss every issue that can ease the transition from a state of war to a state of peace. There are issues pertaining to relations between neighbors, to cooperation, to mutual security. There is a host of issues pertaining to peaceful, neighborly relations. You know, there are many disagreements between countries around the globe—over borders, over territories. Yet not every case of disagreement automatically becomes a conflict and a war. I would like our conflict with the Arab world to turn from a conflict over borders into a disagreement over borders.

[Ronen] But do you believe, Mr. Prime Minister, that the Syrians will agree to put these issues of borders and good-neighbor relations as the first items on the agenda, or will they demand that the first issue be the future of the Golan Heights? Will this be in the center?

[Shamir] If that is what they are going ask, they ought to know what our answer is. We, on our part, will have other proposals.

[Ronen] On the Golan issue?

[Shamir] On the issue of Syrian-Israeli peace.

[Sukenik] I would like to ask you the question of questions, and I doubt that you....

[Shamir, laughing] Do you want to ask me about the Golan Heights?

[Sukenik] A question of principle: In all honesty, will there be room to discuss territorial concessions if genuine peace responding to your every expectation and the Israeli public's every dream prevails?

[Shamir] You know what my stand is: I do not believe in territorial concession.

[Sukenik] At any cost?

[Shamir] Ours is a very small country, and its territory is linked by a thousand strings to our very life essence, to our security, our water, our economy. Where in the entire world will you find people ready to cede the territory of their country, their homeland? I believe wholeheartedly that we are connected to this homeland for eternity.

[Sukenik] Still, what about any compromise at all, if our security is guaranteed?

[Shamir] These two things are inseparable. Peace and security go hand in hand, as do security, territory, and homeland. All these go together; they are one entity. This is our belief; this is the belief of the movement in the framework of which I operate. In my opinion, this is the sentiment of a vast majority of the people of Israel.

[Sukenik] And peace—what is to become of it?

[Shamir] There will be peace. It is a fact that we have been approached with a proposal to hold direct negotiations. Do they not know with whom they are dealing?

[Sukenik] One peace pact was achieved in return for territory.

[Shamir] Not of Eretz Yisra'el.

[Ronen] Mr. Prime Minister, do you not fear that the protracted delay of the Syrian reply may have heralded some kind of deal between Damascus and Washington over a move that may entrap us—if not in the first stage of talks, possibly in a later stage?

[Shamir] One should always doubt; one should always look over one's shoulder. However, we should not entertain fears without cause. Instead, we should take time to pore over documents, to probe and examine things through a magnifying glass. We are in the Middle East, not in a safe harbor, and we need to be cautious, to check before making a move. At the same time, we have to do everything possible in this sphere of peace negotiations. What will we have lost if the Syrians decide to renege on their offer? Nothing will be lost. We are ready. Press reports have said that some Arabs were positive and that we would have an apoplectic fit at the surprise of al-Asad's proposal. Well, we had no apoplexy—on the contrary. We have noted that so far, we are satisfied, and as for the future, let us check and let us talk. Let us talk, let us negotiate.

[Sukenik] Are you marching toward these possible negotiations fearing that we may be making an error, that we may be jeopardizing our security?

[Shamir] I acknowledge that there are risks to be taken in peace negotiations. Nothing is devoid of risk in political life in general, particularly in the Middle East, especially in relationships between Israel and its neighbors. Does war contain no risks? Sometimes we must be ready to take risks, after checking and examining things with open eyes and mind. Anyway, we are not rushing about blindfolded.

[Ronen] Mr. Prime Minister, the Eretz Yisra'el lobby, which convened at the Knesset today, has already determined that the risk you have assumed is too great, and that there is no point in entering negotiations with Syria.

[Shamir] Well, look....

[Ronen] They are speaking of sham euphoria, of al-Asad's mock turnabout. Ari'el Sharon came out almost explicitly against your move, and Tehiya is threatening to bolt the government. Is the coalition in danger?

[Shamir] I do not think the coalition is in danger. I am willing to meet with these colleagues and to persuade them.

[Ronen] You already met with them last week.

[Shamir] And they agreed to what I said. Even today, I am saying: I am true to my stands, and will remain so, but if all the terms are fulfilled, I will be ready to conduct direct, bilateral negotiations without preconditions with every Arab element.

[Sukenik] From your viewpoint, this is a political gamble in a sense, because Ari'el Sharon has expressed a very unequivocal stand against you and against the move—and perhaps in the end, he will emerge victorious.

[Shamir] Oh, well, look, one should be able to take risks. Still, I believe I am not taking any risks on the domestic front. Also, I believe I will manage to convince Ari'el Sharon and all my other colleagues that they have no logical reason to withdraw from the coalition.

[Sukenik] Are you bothered by this conduct, by this almost daily talk against the initiative?

[Shamir] Oh, well, it does not matter; it is irrelevant.

[Ronen] You said you do not believe they will bolt the government at this time. Perhaps they will not withdraw next week, but there is a possibility, nevertheless, that the right-wing parties will do so in a few weeks, after the move unfolds. Are you considering the possibility of calling early elections, if the coalition collapses?

[Shamir] In every coalition, there is always danger of one of the parties' withdrawing; that is why it is a coalition. A party joining a coalition is liable also to leave it.

As for early elections, I have an unchanging stand that I have repeatedly stated: I believe elections should be held on the date assigned for them by law, namely, every four years. Elections are a costly procedure, which disrupts daily life....

[Ronen, interrupting] We are merely talking of a six-month difference.

[Shamir] Even then. They harm the national economy, too. Sometimes there is simply no choice, as has happened in the past, when elections were held a few months earlier than scheduled. We may resort to this, but I hope we will not.

[Ronen] You do not rule it out?

[Shamir] Perhaps.

[Sukenik] Do you believe the coalition can continue functioning in the present situation, with your initiative?

[Shamir] I very much hope so; I see no reason why it should not.

[Ronen] Mr. Prime Minister, I still do not understand precisely who is waiting for whom on the Palestinian issue we discussed at the beginning of this interview. The United States says it is waiting for our answer, while we are saying we are waiting for the U.S. reply on the composition of the Palestinian delegation, with a veto right for us.

[Shamir] No, no, there is no misunderstanding here. The Americans are obviously awaiting answers or clarifications from the Palestinians and the Jordanians—with whom we have no direct dialogue to this very day—while we are waiting for U.S. clarifications. Things are not complicated at all and there is no talk of a veto right. We presented a clear-cut and explicit condition: No PLO. In this entire peace process, there will be no room for the PLO.

[Ronen] Yasir 'Arafat did say today he is not interested in these talks.

[Shamir] So he did. The United States has accepted our condition and it must therefore guarantee it. For that reason, we have to know the identity of the people who will compose the Palestinian part of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. That is all; this is not a veto.

Another point: The Americans have formulated this issue diplomatically, saying: We will not force Israel to negotiate with anyone with whom it does not wish to negotiate. For that reason, we would like to know with whom we will be requested to negotiate.

[Sukenik] Can you envision some possibility that we will somehow allow Palestinians from Jerusalem to participate in the delegation?

[Shamir] That is out of the question.

[Sukenik] Under no circumstances?

[Shamir] Never.

[Ronen] Not even in the second stage of the negotiations?

[Shamir] Never. I think that over this there is almost a complete consensus in Israel: United Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. I believe Jerusalem should not feature in any negotiations. There is nothing to discuss.

[Ronen] But what will happen if, as Israeli television's Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari suggested today, the Jordanian delegation—over which we have no control—is somehow infiltrated by someone from East Jerusalem so that symbolically, at least,....

[Shamir, interrupting] Look, I will not go into detail. Perhaps someone might attempt what Ehud Ya'ari suggested. Still, our position on Jerusalem is as clear as day. Some time ago, when the Israeli Government fell....

[Ronen, interrupting] The unity government.

[Shamir] It fell because of our objection, or my objection, to the participation of anyone from East Jerusalem. I have not changed my opinion.

[Sukenik] This, I believe, is presently the main obstacle to the conference.

[Shamir] It is one of the obstacles.

[Sukenik] Have you considered the fact that you, or Israel—having already been the butt of earlier criticism—might be accused of sabotaging the move, even at this stage?

[Shamir] I would rather be accused of this than of endangering Jerusalem or its status.

[Ronen] Mr. Prime Minister, do you agree with Minister Sharon that before we launch any talks with Syria and al-Asad, he will have to demonstrate readiness to disarm and relinquish mainly the long- range missiles he has been procuring at an accelerated pace since the end of the Gulf war? Should the disarming of lethal weapons constitute a precondition before we enter the talks?

[Shamir] Look, this issue of disarmament is very weighty and important, but we are not yet at a stage where we can dictate to our neighbors what comes first. Right now, they are suggesting direct negotiations. I think that we cannot but give an affirmative response to this. During negotiations, it will also be possible to discuss weapons, the arms race. There are all sorts of plans; President Bush has come up with one. Certainly in the next few years we will have to devote much time to discussions of this issue of the arms race.

[Sukenik] Meanwhile, the U.S. ultimatum to Iraq expires tomorrow. Is there any danger that the missile threat would again hover over Israel in the near future, perhaps?

[Shamir] I hope not, but the matter is not in our hands.

[Ronen] Mr. Prime Minister, are you still optimistic that a peace conference between us and the Arab countries could be held in one, two, or three months?

[Shamir] This possibility exists. Certainly based on our talks with the Americans and according to what we have heard and seen in the region the chance exists; this possibility may come about. I would not like to say that if such negotiations start they will mark the end of all the conflicts and wars. As you know, we are at present asking for very little, merely the start of negotiations. After all, negotiations may also fail or adjourn. There can be crises. The talks can break and then resume later. We said, however, that it is necessary to start with something. I think it is important that we begin negotiations with our neighbors. It is also important so that it is clear and obvious that our neighbors recognize Israel's existence and the need to negotiate with it on coexistence.

[Ronen] Still, there is some meaningful shift here, though I may hesitate to call it a historic shift. To end this interview, let me ask you, Mr. Prime Minister: How would you like to see yourself go down in history: As one who never budged on relinquishing parts of Eretz Yisra'el, or as one who brought lasting peace to Israel and the Arab countries?

[Shamir] Look, I am not thinking about history. I think about what I must do tomorrow and the day after for the sake of the people of Israel and Eretz Yisra'el, and I must do my best. I shall do exactly that.

[Ronen] Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister. Let me also thank you also on behalf of my colleague, Gadi Sukenik, as well as on behalf of our viewers at home. Good evening to everyone from the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem.

Sharon Denounces Ministers Who Praise Syria

TA2407120091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Cabinet ministers who praise the Syrian tyrant make life difficult for Israel and cause harm. This was stated a short while ago by Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon. All information we possess indicates there is no change in Syria's position. Our correspondent Asaf Ya'ari cites Minister Sharon's remarks:

[Begin Sharon recording] All those who praise and laud Syria will only push Israel into very difficult situations in the future, since it is clear that Israel will be unable to accept the Arabs' demands. Elements worldwide will then come back to Israel and say: You lauded Syria, after all; it was you who talked about a dramatic, historic change, and you who suddenly began to compare al-Asad to al-Sadat rather than to Saddam Husayn, so what are you complaining about? This is what we will be told then. Therefore, the self-control and even the little self-dignity which should have characterized people who find themselves in an uneasy condition, as we do, have disappeared. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 24 July quotes Sharon as saying that "everybody is clearly in a state of euphoria. Nobody wants peace more than the Jews, and nobody wants to enter a peace process more than the State of Israel. Still, if we lift this screen of euphoria a little and view the real situation, we will understand that this is one of the most difficult and perhaps even the most dangerous periods in Israel's history, not only due to tendencies emerging both in the Arab world and among world nations, including those which are most friendly toward Israel, but also due to weakening in our steadfastness and retreat from very clear and recent Israeli positions."]

Rightist Parties Deny Intent To Leave Coalition

Tehiya's Ne'eman Interviewed

TA2507052491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Telephone interview with Yuval Ne'eman, minister of energy and infrastructure and of science and technology, in Geneva, by Shlomo Qital—live]

[Excerpts] [Qital] Good morning, Minister Ne'eman.

[Ne'eman] Good morning.

[Qital] Will the prime minister manage to convince you to stay?

[Ne'eman] I believe we have still not decided to leave the coalition. What happened is that the Tehiya secretariat convened Tuesday night for almost five hours, until midnight, during which time most members had their say. We thoroughly discussed the issue with a feeling of deja vu regarding the loss of the Sinai and the destruction of Yamit. We felt a serious concern about the Golan Heights and the autonomy, which can turn into a Palestinian state. We agreed on a series of conditions and developments that, if they should take place, would justify or would call for leaving and joining the opposition.

I left the country yesterday morning, but two things happened yesterday which, had they been proven true, would have certainly justified our quitting. From remarks made by Minister Dan Meridor, it sounded as though autonomy negotiations have already been renewed and as though Israel has agreed to an Arab from Jerusalem joining in another three years, at the next stage of the autonomy, in which it will turn into a Palestinian state according to that plan. Those things worried us very much. The faction convened and decided that those would be the kind of criteria that would justify leaving the coalition and that it would recommend leaving over them. I called to clarify the situation and received flat denials on the two issues from the prime minister. Of course, nobody can prevent the Americans from dreaming about such ideas and from dealing with them, but if Israel has not decided on them and they are mere rumors, whatever happened yesterday has passed. [passage omitted]

[Qital] Do you see any possibility at all, according to your world view, of peace with the Arabs?

[Ne'eman] Of course, when they agree to peace in return for peace. President Reagan hardened his positions, and that led to the other side's collapse. The moment that the Arabs recognize the fact that they have no choice but to make peace in return for peace—and that moment may be a long time in coming—the situation will be excellent, of course.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 25 July carries a related report on page A3 by Menahem Rahat which adds that Minister Ne'eman "criticized his colleagues in the Tehiya for creating an 'atmosphere of hysteria' yesterday with the secretariat's decision to recommend to the Central Committee to quit the coalition."]

NRP Aide Backs Coalition

TA2507112091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Yitzhaq Levi, NRP [National Religious Party] secretary, said there is no excuse for a government crisis at present, because the prime minister is not violating the coalition agreement. Rabbi Levi did express concern, however, about the future of the Golan Heights. [passage omitted]

Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi conferred at noon with the prime minister on issues connected to future political moves and the future of the government.

Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the Labor Party bureau, convening for its weekly meeting this afternoon, will deal with the rumors about contacts to revive the unity government.

Levi Sees No Reason for Right Wing's Concern

TA2507060191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi has said: I do not understand the reason for concern among the right wing. I believe that the Likud and the government stand firm as a bulwark in looking after the country's interests. Our correspondent Sarit Mikha'eli reports on the foreign minister's remarks:

We are advancing the peace process based on the government's basic guidelines, as ratified by the Knesset and as we all agreed upon, and with full coordination between the three ministers who are conducting the contacts and dealing with the issue. Foreign Minister David Levi said this in response to the Tehiya secretariat's decision to recommend leaving the government and to developments taking place among other right-wing Knesset members and ministers.

[Begin Levi recording] I believe that there is no reason for this, because this government and certainly the Likud stand firm as a bulwark in protecting the state's interests, while investing special effort in advancing the peace process on the basis of our national outlook and the government's basic guidelines. Therefore, all these reactions appear to me as hasty, wrong, and I can only regret them. I hope that wisdom will prevail. [end recording]

Minister Levi said that during his visit to Egypt he will try to strengthen the ties between the two countries and bring about an open dialogue between the leaders in order to prove that peace pays off. Levi did not reply to a question on whether he will be carrying a message from the prime minister, but said: Whatever I will say will have been coordinated with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir.

Milo—Current Moves 'First Steps' Toward Peace

TA2407050191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Here at home there are growing indications that government leaders believe the Middle East is on the edge of a breakthrough. In a statement issued after a meeting with U.S. prosecutors, the Prime Minister's Office said he had told the visitors that the start of negotiations appeared close. He said Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad had undergone a transformation in his geopolitical thinking.

Police Minister Roni Milo echoed these views when he addressed a visiting group of [Israel] Bonds leaders from the United States last night.

[Begin Milo recording] In these days when we are making efforts to go forward in the peace process—and I can tell you that we are on a route that is a real breakthrough towards peace—I think that the new policy of the president of Syria, his acceptance of our proposal to have direct negotiations between Israel and Syria, this is a very important step. I could say even a dramatic step, towards peace in our region, towards direct negotiations between us and our neighbors. These days I believe in the future, in the history books, when people will read about these days, will remember this was the first days and the first steps towards peace between Israel and the Arab neighbors that still have no peace with Israel, like Syria, like Jordan, and the Palestinians who are living in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. [end recording]

Moda'i Faults Lack of Information on Peace Plan

TA2507105691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i is touring 'Emeq Yizre'el. He said he supports the U.S. peace plan in principle, but warned against a hasty reply to Baker because what Israel has is not substantiated political information, but mainly assessments and rumors. Even Yitzhaq Shamir does not know all the details of the U.S. plan, Moda'i said. Hayim Hecht talked to Minister Moda'i, who, as will be recalled, was the master constraints minister in the famous trio with David Levi and Ari'el Sharon. That package has disbanded. Moda'i now positions himself cautiously between the Sharon and Levi poles.

[Begin recording] [Moda'i] In principle, I support any process in which there is a chance of bringing about peace or even just to advance and improve relations. In reference to the Baker package, I do not know what it contains. We did not see the Syrian agreement in writing; we do not know what the proposals on the composition of the delegations, especially the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, are. If the intention behind those moves is sincere, however, I am convinced that we will find a way at least to reach the negotiating table. It is difficult to forecast what will happen around the table.

[Hecht] Sir, are you saying that Yitzhaq Shamir has still not shared with his senior ministers all the details of the plan?

[Moda'i] I am not sure he himself has all the details, because even he has not seen the Syrian letter, for example. [end recording]

[Hecht] Moda'i believes that Levi does not know much more. It is inconceivable to withdraw from the Golan Heights under any condition. Any new initiative contains more rumors and assessments than substantiated political information, Moda'i said. His conclusion is that there is no need to rush.

Defense, Finance Ministers in Accord on Budget

TA2507110491 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 25 Jul 91 pp 1, 4

[Report by Avi Bnayahu]

[Text] Top defense establishment and IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officials fear that the optimism regarding the possibility that Israel will join the political process toward peace will hamper efforts to obtain government approval for a substantial supplementary budget. The defense establishment is concerned that the ministers and Treasury officials will take advantage of the new situation, which may last for several months, to avoid approving the supplementary defense budget.

Meanwhile, it has been learned that a week ago the defense and finance ministers agreed that the Treasury will funnel into the defense budget a sum of 162 million shekels as compensation for the special IDF expenses incurred during the Gulf war. It was also agreed that the Finance Ministry will allocate an additional sum of 200 million shekels for the 1991 defense budget. This agreement was reached after an argument over the budget and the rebates for unbudgeted expenses.

Ministers Arens and Moda'i agreed that 125 million shekels will be funneled into the defense budget immediately and that another 75 million shekels will be transferred to the defense budget at the end of 1992.

Security sources have reported that in view of the agreement reached a week ago, the defense establishment is withdrawing all its budgetary demands for 1991. It has also been reported that the Treasury has refused to hand over to the IDF a sum of tens of millions of dollars gained through a saving in reserve days in 1990 and that the IDF will consequently have to accept a compromise solution. As for the need for a supplementary defense budget in the next few years, senior security elements told 'AL HAMISHMAR yesterday: "It should be remembered that peace and a peace agreement come only from a position of strength; if that is weakened, peace will not survive, either. The Syrian president's agreement to enter into the political process stems not only from U.S. pressure, but also from the fact that Israel is strong and has a deterrent capability. If Israel's military strength

weakens in the near future, the agreements will not stand a chance. Today, more than ever before, the government must make sure that the IDF preserves its strength so that it will be able to respond to future threats," the sources said.

Our military correspondent points out that Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq is demanding an extra 500 million shekels for the annual basic defense budget for the next three years. The Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs yesterday began discussing the IDF's multiyear plan, with defense establishment and IDF officials briefing the prime minister on the main points of the plan.

Shamir Aides Fear New Sharon Construction Drive

TA2407140491 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
24 Jul 91 p A1

[Report by Avino'am Bar-Yosef and Menahem Rahat]

[Text] Political echelons in Jerusalem fear that Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon may take advantage of the coming weeks before the peace conference to carry out a demonstrative wide-scale construction drive beyond the Green Line. Elements in the Prime Minister's Office fear that there will be an attempt to repeat the maneuver that caused a storm at the climax of political debates over peace with Egypt, when water towers were built in the Gaza Strip.

Yesterday Sharon referred to the possibility that settlements may be established to torpedo peace moves as "nonsense."

Senior political sources are convinced that a major settlement effort would be regarded by the entire Western world as provocation by Israel and that such an effort is liable to foil the peace process.

Referring to al-Asad's declarations, Sharon warned yesterday: "We may be dealing here with a sophisticated Syrian-Arab scheme designed to bestow immunity on Syria's buildup plan. We must be very careful not to fall into this trap."

Knesset Committee Approves Money for Settlements

TA2407150391 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
24 Jul 91 p 1

[By Moshe Perl]

[Text] Following a bitter dispute within the Labor faction, the Knesset's Finance Committee ultimately decided, in an extraordinary session, to approve the transfer of 15 million shekels to settlements in the territories, on the Golan Heights, and in the Jordan Rift Valley.

At the request of the Treasury, the money will be taken from the state budget's general reserve and given to the Agriculture Ministry's Land Settlement Department. According to an early arrangement, the department will give half the sum to settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the other half will be funneled to settlements on the Golan Heights and in the Jordan Rift Valley.

The Knesset Finance Committee put the issue to a vote following consultations that stirred a bitter debate in the Labor faction. The faction finally decided to impose party discipline and force its members to oppose the transfer of the allocations.

Knesset Members [MK's] Gedalya Gal and Shim'on Shetrit, who are on the committee, decided to be absent from the vote as a protest. MK's Avraham Katz-'Oz and 'Edna Solodar, on the other hand, chose to ignore the party's ruling and voted along with the coalition members in favor of the money transfer.

Shamir's Change of Stance on Syria Examined

TA2407145091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
24 Jul 91 p A1

[Dan Margalit commentary: "Damascus' Rejectionism Is Over; Shamir Returns to Palestinian Representation"]

[Text] The terms used by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and his aides to describe Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad have undergone a far-reaching linguistic change in the past two days. Yesterday Shamir was already showering the Syrian leader with praise. "Al-Asad is beginning to understand that the international arena is no longer bipolar, that it is almost exclusively dependent on Washington's positions. In these conditions, he cannot aspire to strategic parity with Israel," he said in a meeting with U.S. legal aides.

There are two reasons for the change: Beyond reports from U.S. sources, there were Israeli experts who briefed the prime minister on the significant change in al-Asad's geostrategic perception. Shamir, moreover, has subjected the Syrian president to a severe trial in the Arab world by describing him as a man who has shown extreme flexibility to enable the political process to materialize. This may hamper the Syrian president; but if he persists in this attitude, he will eventually push Shamir into a position in which he will no longer be able to avoid a regional peace conference.

Instead of resorting to al-Asad's rejectionism as a pretext to disrupt the political process, Shamir has chosen a new line of defense: He will retain the right to decide on his participation in a regional peace conference, but will not do so in response to al-Asad's radical stands. Rather, he will do the same thing on the basis of the controversy over the composition of the Palestinian composition, because he, Shamir, has in his possession an Israeli-U.S. nondocument-document dated May 1991 giving him the right to veto the Palestinian delegation lest it include representatives from Jerusalem, from abroad, or from the PLO. Israel hopes that the Palestinians will persist in their refusal to accept the American demand, thereby

torpedoing the regional conference and allowing the whole government to survive without disrupting relations with the United States.

The American solution to the problem of Palestinian representation is unclear to the government in Jerusalem. David Levi's aides, who would like to attain a peace conference, hope that either the United States has a secret Palestinian promise not to be difficult on the representation issue, or that foreign ministers only will be invited to the initial round. (Some in the prime minister's entourage propose that the opening round be upgraded to heads of state.)

Amid all this uncertainty, the right-wing parties are vacillating on the question of withdrawing from the government. They are not forgetting that Shamir can still thwart the convening of the peace conference, but they suspect more and more that he intends to participate in one. Even if such an opening takes place, many in Tehiya, Moledet, and Tzomet estimate that their early withdrawal from the government will be unpopular with the national camp's voters, because they believe that determined Likud supporters would like to reach preliminary negotiations with Syria and will be angry if those are disrupted. The right-wing parties are afraid that withdrawal will not increase their support; that the issue of a UN observer's presence is not a sufficient pretext for such a step, although Tehiya is at this stage committed to this position; that Shamir will enjoy growing popularity by allowing a peace conference to be launched and declaring early Knesset elections before an international political crisis arises; and that in the atmosphere of a peace conference, violence in the territories will abate, weakening the right-wing parties on election day. In the meantime, Tehiya, Moledet, and Tzomet are settling for a warning. They hope that, despite the optimistic trends in the West, in the international arena, and even on the stock exchange, their adversaries' summer festival will have been premature.

Shamir Urged To Talk if Terms 'Reasonable'

TA2107131391 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 21 Jul 91 p 2

[Editorial by Yesha'yahu Ben-Porat: "A Point of No Return"]

[Text] Yitzhaq Shamir does not owe Hafiz al-Asad anything. Even the U.S. compliments to the Syrian president, whose reply is defined as "positive," does not oblige the prime minister to go out of his way to buy a pig in a poke or to accept a reply the precise wording of which is still kept secret.

In his meeting with the secretary of state, Shamir is not merely permitted but obliged to demand to be told what is in al-Asad's letter, as well as the fine print.

The world knows no precedent of a sovereign government's consenting to enter blindfolded into negotiations with a hostile neighbor, oblivious to the terms and conditions possibly contrived behind its back between the neighbor and the mediator. With all due respect to President Bush and his emissary Baker, they bear the onus of proof. Until the picture becomes clearer, the Shamir government should act cautiously and avoid traps someone may have laid on its path.

Discounting reservations over the mystery enveloping al-Asad's reply, from this point on Yitzhaq Shamir is duty bound to prove to the nation which elected him to steer the country that he is and will continue doing everything he can to promote the peace process, which had been launched with an initiative bearing his name. No one knows better than Shamir that if the process collapses, God forbid, the unavoidable, fatal alternative in the foreseeable future will be another unnecessary war. The countdown may begin on the day when the world points its finger at Israel as the country responsible for thwarting the peace conference.

Therefore, Shamir should not stubbornly insist on marginal procedural details. If it is true that al-Asad agrees to a conference that will only occasionally reconvene for updating and to a passive and de facto silent presence of a UN representative, Shamir should not heap unnecessary obstacles liable to foil the entire move.

This approach will be even more important if it turns out that al-Asad has become more flexible in matters of substance, no longer demanding to receive the Golan Heights as a precondition for direct negotiations. For there has never been an Israeli Government, including that of Shamir, which has not repeatedly stated its willingness to negotiate without preconditions with every country, including Syria.

It is possible that when Shamir came out with his initiative two years ago, he never believed we would get as far as we have. Right now, he must understand that this is the point of no return: The alternative is either peace on terms which are certainly not ideal but may be reasonable, or more wars. Shamir owes it to his people to say no to war.

Palestinian Representatives View Peace Process

TA2407131491 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Jul 91 p A4

[Interviews with 'Abd-al-Latif Ghayth, "affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine"; Hanna Amirah, "affiliated with the Communist Party"; Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, "affiliated with the Fatah mainstream"; Dr. Nihad al-Masri, "affiliated with Hamas"—Islamic Resistance Movement—and Zuhayra Kamal, "affiliated with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, 'Abd-Rubbuh faction"; place and date not given—identical questions posed to all interviewees]

[Text] [MA'ARIV] What is your view of the status of East Jerusalem in the political process?

[Ghayth] It will be the capital of the Palestinian state. It has a special status, but that does not change the fact that it will be part of the Palestinian state.
[Amirah] I consider East Jerusalem part of the occupied territories. Therefore, we will not accept attempts to separate it from other areas, such as Ramallah and Nabulus.
[Al-Tibi] It is territory occupied in 1967 and therefore cannot be separated from Nabulus, Ramallah, or any other region on the West Bank.
[Al-Masri] There is no difference between East Jerusalem and Gaza or Judaea and Samaria. All the territories are the same. We consider Jerusalem our capital, just as you view it as the capital of Israel. Jerusalem has a special political status.
[Kamal] East Jerusalem is an inseparable part of the land of Palestine. It will be the capital of Palestine.

[MA'ARIV] What is your position on East Jerusalem's being represented in the Palestinian delegation?

[Ghayth] In view of Jerusalem's special status among the Palestinians, it is clear that we will not yield on the issue of a Palestinian representative from the city in the delegation.
[Amirah] Accepting the Israeli condition on nonparticipation by a Palestinian from Jerusalem or outside the area would be agreeing a priori to conceding East Jerusalem and the Palestinians' right of return. Only one-third of the Palestinian people live here.
[Al-Tibi] One must make sure that the people of East Jerusalem are represented in the Palestinian delegation.
[Kamal] We have the right to choose which Palestinians will represent us both from within and outside. East Jerusalem is part of the occupied lands, and the Palestinians from East Jerusalem must be included in the delegation. For us that is the red line.
[No answer is given for al-Masri on this question]

[MA'ARIV] What is your position on a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation?

[Ghayth] We want an independent delegation. That will constitute world recognition of the PLO. In return for guarantees on an Israeli withdrawal and the establishment of a Palestinian state, a joint Palestinian delegation is possible.
[Amirah] A decision on the issue of Palestinian representation, an independent or joint delegation, must be made only by the Palestine National Council.
[Al-Tibi] We do not rule out any idea as long as the decision is made by the PLO. It would be better to have the Palestinians from the diaspora represented as well. That is more important than many other issues.
[Al-Masri] The issue is technical and not of the greatest importance. There are points of principle, such as stopping settlements. Israel has plans to settle hundreds of thousands of Jews in the territories within several years.
[Kamal] We aspire to an independent delegation, but at the same time we do not oppose being included in a joint delegation in which the Palestinian members will be selected by the PLO.

[MA'ARIV] How do you view the Syrian position?

[Ghayth] It is a surprising stand. They never talked about direct negotiations with Israel. It is possible that they received a U.S. assurance about a withdrawal from the Golan Heights.
[Amirah] The Syrian position is positive and in my view was adopted without U.S. guarantees. In my view, the Israeli Government will oppose the current initiative.
[Al-Tibi] Al-Asad recognizes the new world order. I welcome the president's announcement about his readiness to participate in a conference. What is behind that decision is unimportant to me.
[Al-Masri] It is a positive change by Syria. I believe that President al-Asad is wise and knows the rules of the game.
[Kamal] They presented their position unconditionally and lifted the obstacles on the path to peace. It is important that the Palestinians be part of the negotiations. At the moment, Israel is the obstacle to peace.

[MA'ARIV] What is your view of the Baker plan?

[Ghayth] I am opposed. It ignores the basic rights of the Palestinian people, such as the right of return and a Palestinian state. We do not trust the Americans, and if the problem of the Palestinian people is not solved, there will be no solution to the problem of the Middle East.
[Amirah] Baker did not present the Palestinians with clear points or guarantees to implement the Security Council resolutions but only formal proposals. At present, any communications with the Palestinians must be made through the PLO delegation in Cairo.
[Al-Tibi] Several important points, such as Palestinian representation in the talks, must be clarified before agreement is given. There are other questions that have not been discussed. Without Palestinian participation, with the agreement of 'Arafat, there will not be a conference.
[Al-Masri] I am pessimistic about that plan. First, Israel will not accept it. In my view, the government will fall and there will be elections. Afterward, there will be U.S. elections. Thus we are, in fact, falling into the same trap. I do not support meetings with Baker.
[Kamal] The PLO's peace initiative of 1988 was the opening to peace. The Palestinians do not constitute an obstacle, and support the Baker plan. There is a problem about Palestinian representation. We insist that the PLO appoint the delegation.

[MA'ARIV] What is the solution, in your view?

[Ghayth] I am not optimistic. It seems that at this moment any solution will be at the expense of the Palestinians. There must be a just solution within the framework of which a Palestinian state will be established. Such a solution will bring quiet to the region and to the Jewish people.
[Amirah] The establishment of a Palestinian state in Judaea and Samaria and Gaza alongside the State of Israel.

[Al-Tibi] An independent state next to Israel. The formula is peace in return for territories and economic cooperation. In an interim settlement, we must be given responsibility for running a government, including control of the water resources.
[Al-Masri] We want to be like others. The main thing is to improve the standard of living and to free ourselves of the occupation. We want a Palestinian state, whether large or small.
[Kamal] An independent state. At present, the conditions are apparently ripe for its establishment. In reference to the interim arrangements, if they lead to the fulfillment of our aspirations, we will accept them on condition that it is only for an interim period.

AL-SHA'B—PLO's Exclusion Dooms Talks

TA2407155691 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 23 Jul 91 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "Deferred Answers to Urgent Questions"]

[Text] The news conference held by Palestinian figures in Jerusalem yesterday, following their meeting with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker two days ago, reflects the firmness, clarity, and strength of the Palestinian stance toward all the political moves being led by the United States. Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian delegation, affirmed that the question of Jerusalem, the right to self-determination, the freeze on settlement, and the participation of Jerusalem residents in the proposed Palestinian delegation cannot be conceded under any circumstances. Hannan 'Ashrawi stressed that any negotiations without the Palestinians will be doomed to failure.

During the news conference, al-Husayni disclosed that Baker gave a positive answer to some questions and a negative reply to others, while some questions are still under discussion, noting that the U.S. secretary is convinced that the formation of the Palestinian delegation to the talks concerns the Palestinians alone.

A final analysis of the U.S. secretary of state's talks in Israel indicates that Israel's leaders are not inclined to respond to the resolutions of international legitimacy, just as the U.S. Administration is not inclined to exert any pressure on Israel to persuade it to comply with those resolutions.

Although on the surface the Syrian, Egyptian, and Arab responses appear to have pushed Israel into a corner, the U.S.-Israeli interpretation of the Syrian reply indicates that the region is on the verge of entering into separate and partial solutions on the pattern of those concluded at Camp David between Egypt and Israel. This will reduce the PLO's room for maneuver because of the new international order and the Arab situation, which has become shaky and weak to the core.

The fact that the American plan does not refer to any PLO role in the peace talks and rules out the participation of Jerusalem residents in the negotiations reflects a positive U.S. response to the Israeli wish. This removes the United States from the role of mediator because such a role calls for a minimal degree of disagreement between the United States and Israel.

At any rate, the coming days and weeks will see very important developments, which may either place the region on the threshold of a comprehensive and lasting peace or thrust it toward new wars and conflicts.

While viewing the U.S. moves in the region with further caution and skepticism, we call for the greatest degree of vigilance toward the American and Israeli games, which are being supported by some Arab parties that have deemed fit to stand outside the pan-Arab consensus.

It is worth noting that any plan that rules out a full, active role for the PLO at any anticipated peace conference will be doomed to utter failure.

Polls Find Majority Against Giving Up Golan

TA2207060391 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 22 Jul 91 p 1

[By Hanokh and Rafi Smith]

[Text] The public is not ready to make territorial concessions on the Golan Heights for peace with Syria, according to a poll conducted by the Smith Research Center last month.

According to the poll, which asked 1,100 Jews between June 23-30 if "In order that there will peace with Syria, are you ready for territorial compromise on the Golan Heights?" the responses were as follows:

—Ready to give up all the Golan Heights on condition that there is real peace and security guarantees for Israel: 7 percent.
—Ready to give up part of the Golan Heights on condition that there is real peace and security guarantees for Israel: 28 percent.
—Today, not ready to make territorial concessions for peace on the Golan Heights: 57 percent.
—Other, no opinion: 8 percent.

More than 70 percent of supporters of the right and the religious parties are not ready to make territorial concessions for peace with Syria.

On the left, more than 70 percent of supporters of the Citizen's Rights Movement, Mapam, [United Workers Party] and Shinuy favor giving back at least part of the Golan Heights for real peace with Syria, while 54 percent of Labor backers support the idea.

Nearly two-thirds of Jews originating from Islamic countries and half of those with origins in Europe oppose these territorial concessions, while more than two-thirds of the younger voters (aged 18-29) are opposed.

HADASHOT Poll Agrees

TA2407120591 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 24 Jul 91 p 1

[Text] A telephone poll was conducted yesterday among 509 people, who were asked: Are you for or against returning any part of the Golan Heights in return for peace with Syria? Sixty-one percent opposed, 33 percent were in favor, and six percent said they did not know.

The survey, which was commissioned by HADASHOT, was conducted by Modi'in Ezrahi under the management of Dr. Rahel Yisre'eli.

Labor To Stop Using 'Alignment' as Party Name

TA1907082691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Jul p 2

[Report by Michal Yudelman]

[Text] The Labor Party's Political Bureau yesterday decided to stop using the name "Alignment" in referring to the party, and to reassume its former name, "Labor." The proposal, raised by party secretary-general Mikha Harish was almost unanimously approved.

Harish noted that the term "Alignment" reflected the former alliance with Mapam [United Workers Party], which had broken off from Labor first in the municipal elections, then in the Histadrut [labor federation] and finally in the last Knesset elections, when it decided to run separately.

Harish noted that more than 140,000 members had enrolled in Labor Party and these people were not interested in "anyone to the right or to the left of it. I don't rule out political alliances in the future, but today we march on our strength alone."

MK [Knesset member] Ya'aqov Tzur demanded postponement of any decision on this issue, and claimed it would close the party off to Mapam in the next elections. He noted that the Kibbutz Ha'artzi movement was divided as to whether to join the left wing parties or to preserve the historical alliance with Labor.

No Plan for Flights Despite Bessmertnykh Letter

TA1907083291 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Jul 91 p 2

[Report by Herb Keinon]

[Text] Direct Moscow-Tel Aviv flights for immigrants are not in the immediate offing, Jewish Agency officials said yesterday, despite a message from the Soviet Foreign Minister to David Levi saying the Soviets would like to begin these flights.

Aleksandr Bessmertnykh said in the message sent last week that he would like to find a way along with Israel to open up a direct air link for immigrants. There are currently direct flights between the two countries, but only for tourists and businessmen.

Foreign Ministry officials confirmed that Bessmertnykh indeed sent such a letter to Levi, but that no timetable was mentioned. Similar intentions have been expressed in the past, they added.

One Jewish Agency official involved in the issue said there is no operative plan to start the direct flights anytime soon. "The whole issue is still in the letter-writing stage," he said.

Agency spokesman Gad Ben-Ari said that the Agency has not received word that the flights are imminent. He added that the issue remains on the agenda of Jewish Agency and government officials in all their talks with Soviet officials.

Quarterly Trade With USSR Reaches $20 Million

TA1807141991 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 July p 8

[Report by Sharone Parnes]

[Text] Although just a few years ago the Soviet Union might have seemed like a most unlikely business partner for Israel, trade between the two countries has taken off.

In the first quarter of this year, Soviet-Israeli commerce reached $20 million, almost equalling the $23m. for all of 1990, according to the Association of Israeli Chambers of Commerce.

The organization also announced yesterday that a delegation of 26 senior Soviet business leaders is in Israel for a week. The Soviets—including factory administrators, academics and members of companies and organizations dealing in trade, communications, tourism and advertising—will meet Israeli business leaders to discuss trade potential.

Israel's exports to the Soviet Union include chemicals, industrial and medical equipment, foodstuffs, agricultural products and industrial and medical equipment. The Soviets sell Israel metal, alcoholic beverages, chemicals and mechanical devices, and raw materials for the paper, wood and textile industries.

During the past year, the two countries' Chambers of Commerce have opened offices in the other's country.

No Agreement on Change in UN Deployment in Zone

TA2407120691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Excerpt] There will be no change in the mandate of the UN forces in southern Lebanon when the mandate is renewed this week for an additional six-month period. Defense Minister Moshe Arens said that in talks held this week with UN Under Secretary General Marrack

Goulding, they had not agreed on any changes whatsoever in the deployment of the UN troops in the security zone. [passage omitted]

Gazans Polled on Political, Social Situation

TA1907145191 Jerusalem AL-USBU' AL-JADID in Arabic 15 Jul 91 pp 12, 13, 14, 15

[Results of poll of 495 residents of Gaza Strip "camps, villages, and towns," taken for AL-USBU' AL-JADID "after the Gulf war" by Dr. Riyad al-'Ailah, assistant professor at Gaza Islamic University]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted]

The Economic Situation

On their assessment of the economic situation and the standard of living, 85 percent of the respondents said that the economic situation had been negative for many years and that it had not been directly affected by the intifadah, but rather by the countermeasures used by the authorities to quell the intifadah, and that the economy was basically weak. This last statement was affirmed by 45.85 percent of the respondents.

As for the proposals aimed at improving the economic situation, 33.73 percent expressed the view that cutting economic links with Israel constitutes a step toward improving their economic situation, while 36.56 percent said that lifting restrictions and obstacles to development and investment was a good step.

Some 12.52 percent of the respondents said that providing work for laborers inside the Green Line is an effective contribution toward the improvement of the economic situation. Some 50.1 percent affirmed that providing the necessary funds from various sources to set up appropriate economic projects was a good step toward improving the economic situation.

The Social Situation

When asked their opinion on social relations among the residents and the intifadah's effect on them, 41.41 percent of the respondents were of the view that social relations were good, 21.81 percent said they were very good, and 26.46 percent affirmed that they were excellent. Some 7.87 percent believe that social relations are weak and 0.6 percent very weak.

As for social relations within the family and their effect on the cohesiveness of the social situation, 67.47 percent said that those relations were cohesive and strong, 29.49 percent believed that they were moderate, and 3.83 percent said that they were weak. [passage omitted]

The Educational Situation

Asked about the level of education in the Gaza Strip, 45 percent of the respondents believed that it was weak, and 36.76 percent believed it was very weak. The percentages of those who said that the level of education was acceptable, good, or very good were 14.54, 3.83, and 0.6 respectively.

When asked how the level of education could be improved in conformity with the political conditions under which the Palestinian people are living, 86.48 percent answered that opening schools and universities that have been closed by the authorities since the outbreak of the intifadah and before 1987 constituted a basic factor for improving the educational situation.

On the other hand, 28.48 percent of the respondents said that it was the duty of parents to care for their children and teach them at home. [passage omitted]

Asked their assessment of the educational curricula, 48.08 percent of the respondents emphasized that the curricula were unsuitable and should be replaced by curricula that conform with Palestinian culture and the overall Palestinian situation, particularly social subjects such as history and geography. Some 40.2 percent were of the view that the curricula were unsuitable and should be modified.

Some 11.11 percent of the respondents said that the curricula were suitable for local culture, and 5.45 percent believed that emphasis should be made on social subjects, particularly history and geography, that the Palestinian reality should be addressed through a curriculum supervised by Palestinian experts, and that the curriculum should have Islamic values.

The Political Situation

The view of the residents on the political situation and its impact on the Palestinian problem ranged from bad to acceptable. Some 72.72 percent of the respondents believed that the political situation is bad, and 24.84 percent said that it is acceptable. This is due to the deterioration of the Arab and international situation vis-a-vis the Palestinian problem and the Palestinian people, especially after the Gulf war. Some 13.93 percent of the respondents believed that the political situation is good. [figures as published]

As to the residents' view of the possibility of solving the Palestinian problem, 61.41 percent of the respondents said that a settlement can be achieved only by applying international legitimacy, implementing UN resolutions relating to the Palestinian problem, and not using double standards.

Only 3.83 percent of the respondents expressed their belief in the possibility that the Palestinian problem can be solved by holding elections in the occupied territories. The percentage of those who believed that the U.S. compromise solution and Baker's shuttle visits between the parties to the conflict were the best solution to the Palestinian problem did not exceed 0.8 percent. Some 1.01 percent supported the convocation of a regional conference as an instrument for solving the Palestinian problem.

Asked about the meaning of international legitimacy, 57.57 percent of the respondents believed that legitimacy means the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and establishment of an independent state. Some 70.7 percent of the respondents favored the Palestinian political initiative and asked the PLO to adhere to it and act to implement it with the other parties concerned, in order to achieve the best solution for the Palestinian problem.

As for the proposed initiatives, such as a confederation or federation with Jordan, some 11.51 percent of the respondents said that this should take place after the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Some 1.41 percent of the respondents favored the establishment of a trilateral Palestinian, Jordanian, Israeli confederation. Some 0.6 percent of the respondents believed in the possibility of implementing autonomy in accordance with the Camp David accords.

Some 54.54 percent believed in the possibility of coexistence with the State of Israel, while 42.62 percent believed that coexistence was not possible. This reflects the Palestinian view, which is leaning toward the concept of peaceful coexistence with neighbors regardless of the existing political hostilities.

Some 94.54 percent of the respondents gave a negative answer to the question of whether an American solution will be to the benefit of the Palestinian people, while 5.65 percent answered positively. This reflects the residents' fear of the U.S. position and its lack of seriousness in defining international legitimacy, which means the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and establishment of an independent state. [passage omitted]

PLO Seen on Wane in Gaza Professionals Poll

TA2107113591 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 21 Jul 91 p 10

[News agencies report]

[Text] The Islamic Bloc scored an emphatic victory on Friday in elections within the Arab Chartered Accountants Society, the largest Palestinian organization in the Gaza Strip.

The Islamic Bloc, made up of supporters of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad organization, won seven of the nine seats on the society's board of governors. The other two seats went to supporters of the PLO.

In the last election, 20 months ago, PLO supporters won seven seats and the Islamic Bloc two.

Palestinian sources said the vote showed that support for the PLO was declining in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where elections for professional organizations are seen as demonstrating the strength of various factions.

In an election for the chamber of commerce in the West Bank town of Hebron on June 19, the Islamic list won six of the 11 seats.

Supporters of the Islamic Bloc, including non-accountants, from all over the Gaza Strip celebrated Friday's result, chanting: "Allahu Akbar" (God is great) and "Victory for Islam."

Almost 700 accountants, or 83.8 percent of those registered, took part in the vote.

Envoys Need Okay for Israeli Media Interviews

TA2107114191 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 21 Jul 91 p A8

[By Avi Raz from New York]

[Text] The Foreign Ministry has forbidden the heads of Israel's diplomatic representations abroad to grant interviews to Israeli media.

The ambassadors and consuls general throughout the world have recently received a message from Jerusalem saying that any interview with Israeli media requires the explicit approval of the director general of the Foreign Ministry or the ministry's spokesman. It was signed by the director of the Foreign Ministry's coordination department.

There is no parallel to this with respect to interviews with non-Israeli media, and it actually discriminates against Israeli media.

The addressees of the message were requested to observe the new regulation faithfully.

Foreign Minister Discusses Quadripartite Meeting

JN2407125591 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1114 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur by Khalil al-Qaryuti on 24 July; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Qaryuti] Your eminence the minister, there were reports today that a quadripartite meeting attended by Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and the PLO will be held to decide on Palestinian representation. How true are these reports?

[Al-Nusur] First, holding a meeting to be attended by the three countries and the PLO to decide on the Palestinian representation issue is baseless and completely rejected, because the issue of Palestinian representation can be decided by the PLO only—no country has the right to interfere in naming the members of the Palestinian delegation. However, holding a quadripartite meeting to be attended by the three countries—Egypt, Syria, and Jordan—and the PLO is a very important issue. There must be coordination, and the Arab parties must agree on a unified position. However, for sure the objective is not Palestinian representation, because this is a matter that concerns the Palestinians alone.

[Al-Qaryuti] Your eminence the minister, what are the most important issues that will be raised with Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid, and does the Jordanian side have specific topics to raise with him?

[Al-Nusur] Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid heads the Arab League following a huge incident; namely, the Gulf crisis and war. The Gulf war revealed clear defects in the Arab order and Arab relations, and in the way Arab events are contained. No doubt, a great defect was revealed by the events. The Arab League, whether the general secretariat or the member states, must revise the League's system, practices, and mode of action in a manner that would enable this very important organization to contain issues before they escalate, not run and pant after them. This will be the first topic. There are many other issues. Coordination among the Arab countries of the peace process is an important issue because the Arab perspective of the Palestine question is clear, and its seriousness is known. Therefore, more than ever before, we must see an outstanding role for the Arab League.

[Al-Qaryuti] Thank you.

'Bitter Row' in Parliament Over Peace Process

JN2507064291 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25-26 Jul 91 pp 1,5

[Report by Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—A bitter row broke out in the Lower House of Parliament Wednesday over charges by some Islamist and Arab nationalist deputies that the government was bypassing the will of Parliament and sacrificing Palestinian rights and Palestine.

In response to the accusations, two cabinet ministers, known for their Arab nationalist ideology, pledged to resign from the cabinet if the proposed peace talks with Israel steered away from securing the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to their homeland.

The row started after deputies coupled accusations against the government with a demand for a briefing from Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri on the outcome of the recent talks held here by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. At the end of the Baker visit, earlier this week, Jordan said it was willing to attend a Middle East peace conference and would also lift the Arab boycott of Israel if the conditions were right.

As Mr. Baker ended his visit, the Lower House issued a statement rejecting all American initiatives for peace and denouncing the "double standard" of the U.S. While a peace conference is acceptable to Parliament, it will not accept direct bilateral talks with Israel, the statement said.

During Wednesday's session, Islamist and some pan-Arab nationalist deputies cited this statement as the position of the legislative authority and questioned why the government was not giving it the due respect.

After almost half an hour of short but sharp comments by the deputies in the House, Muhammad Faris al-Tarawinah, minister of state for prime ministry affairs, accused the Muslim Brotherhood Movement of hypocricy and pointed out that the movement had joined the government of Prime Minister Mudar Badran which held two rounds of talks with Mr. Baker on the peace process since the end of the Gulf war.

Mr. Muhammad Faris al-Tarawinah addressed former Education Minister 'Abdallah al-Akayilah, a Muslim Brotherhood deputy who served in the Badran cabinet, and asked him why he was not so "excited when he served with the former government."

"Does my respected colleague have more allegiance to this country or is he more nationalist than the members of this cabinet? asked Mr. al-Tarawinah, a former Ba'thist Party activist.

Dr. al-Akayilah had said that the fact that the government had won the confidence of the Lower House shows great contradictions with the House's stand which rejects peace talks with Israel.

"Some members of this government spent four decades fighting for the sake of Palestine while others were watching," Mr. al-Tarawinah countered. "Some members of this cabinet ran for parliamentary elections while their passports were held, while others have been speaking freely for the past 40 years," Mr. al-Tarawinah said.

The minister was recalling that the Brotherhood enjoyed wide government support since 1948 and the movement was officially tolerated while other political groups were banned since 1957. He said that the government reserves the right to open dialogue with all the countries of the world to achieve its interests.

"None of you should dare outbid us with their slogans because we will never drop out claim to Palestine," Mr. al-Tarawinah told the Brotherhood members. He said: "When this government enters any such talks you will see me submit my resignation."

Environment Minister Salim al-Zu'bi joined Mr. al-Tarawinah and affirmed that "there are ministers in this government who are against peace talks."

Mr. al-Masri, who had tried to take the floor ahead of the two ministers, then requested to be heard. He reiterated his government's commitments to the principles which the Kingdom adhered to since 1967 when Israel occupied the West Bank.

"The cabinet had presented the House with its policy statement in which it stressed the principles (of the Kingdom's policies) and has adhered to these principles in spirit and text," Mr. al-Masri said. He promised the House that he would brief them on the details of the Jordanian talks with Mr. Baker in a closed meeting. He asked that the discussions over this issue be closed.

Sources later told the Jordan Times that the row was carried out into the corridors of the chamber of deputies but was solved amicably. The parliament sources said also that the two ministers were upset by Speaker 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat's handling of the discussions in the House and were angered by "his obvious bias for his movement's deputies in the House." The sources added that the two ministers later met with the other cabinet members and discussed Wednesday's row.

Other observers said that the two ministers were unable to see any shift in their position vis-a-vis the Palestinian issue and "acted on impulse against the accusations."

"Both Mr. al-Tarawinah and Mr. al-Zu'bi are well-known activists who have spent years in jail because they were anti-establishment. It [will] take some time before they can adapt to their new-found roles," one independent deputy commented.

Others blamed Muslim Brotherhood deputies for throwing accusations before they were privy to the details of the Jordanian talks with Mr. Baker.

"It is almost as if they come to Parliament prepared to create a fight before they even know all the facts. Perhaps this is how democracy works," was the dry comment of another independent deputy.

League Chief Urged To Back Iraqis, Palestinians

JN2507095991 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 25 Jul 91 pp 1, 16

[Unattributed editorial: "Toward a More Effective Role for the Arab League's Secretary General"]

[Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid's first visit to Jordan is a good opportunity to talk about the affairs of the Arab house, whose pillars have been strongly shaken during the Gulf crisis, and for a frank discussion of the role the Arab League is expected to play in this crucial stage of our nation's life.

We are aware that the new Arab League secretary general is still feeling his way amid a host of Arab problems and hot issues. We are also aware that Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid has not yet completed his tour of the Arab League member states, which we hope will not exclude any country. We hope that the secretary general will not hesitate to make every possible effort to effectively, strongly, and sincerely heal the dangerous rift caused by the Gulf crisis within the Arab ranks, restore joint Arab action, whose effectiveness has dwindled at this stage, and bypass the past without ignoring any of the numerous lessons learned from the pan-Arab catastrophe.

Hence, while looking forward to a more effective Arab League role, we do not want the Arab League's General Secretariat to remain silent over a number of crucial challenges and dangers facing this nation, especially in Iraq, whose people are being exposed to siege, threats, and starvation; in the occupied Palestinian territories, whose holy shrines and inhabitants are being daily abused by the Jewish settlers; and in Kuwait, where our innocent sons are being subjected to campaigns of repression, coercion, and deportation.

Although we know in advance that some countries are sensitive to views or positions that could be interpreted as interference in their internal affairs or encroachment on their national sovereignty, we hope that Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid will be able, through his well-known shrewdness and sound judgment, to undertake determined efforts to heal the wounds caused by the crisis, turn over the page of the past, and draw the attention of all brothers to the higher interests of this nation, whose countries have lost sovereignty and independent opinion under the current huge foreign influence.

The task of reorganizing the Arab house at this stage is a difficult one. It is naturally the task of all Arab leaders and capitals, but this should not prevent us from saying that the secretary general's role can be extremely vital in this respect and that he can cut short both time and distance by establishing bridges of love and unity and contributing effectively to the restoration of the traditional Arab relations.

This is how we would like to understand the secretary general's tour and the secretariat's role, especially since this nation has no alternative to solidarity, unity, and

renunciation of division. Hence, all sincere Arab leaders and officials are urged to expedite an end to the current state of deterioration as a prelude to laying down the pillars of a more solid and modern Arab order that is better capable of reacting to events and changes, more responsive to the internal challenges, and better able to confront the external dangers.

Council Warns of U.S. Mediation, Concessions

JN2507060091 Amman AL-RAY in Arabic
25 Jul 91 p 2

[Text] The Professional Associations Doyens Council has warned of the outcome of the alleged U.S. mediation to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute, pointing out that this mediation has materialized in continued U.S. support for Israeli policies.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Council urged vigilance toward the series of concessions being offered by the Arab side on the pretext of tempering Israeli recalcitrance. The Council regretted that the Arab side has abandoned the mission of sound preparations to stand up to Zionist arrogance, indicating that Israeli penetration into the region would undermine the material and spiritual essence of Arab and Islamic civilization, nurture regionalism, and increase backwardness and subordination in its economic, political, and cultural life.

The statement also reviewed U.S. practices in the region, especially its war against Iraq that aimed to destroy its scientific, economic, and military structure, noting that the war dealt a blow to Arab solidarity and the unity of Arab peoples.

Iranian Criticism of Peace Efforts Questioned

JN2407110991 Amman AL-RAY in Arabic
24 Jul 91 pp 1, 24

[Unattributed editorial: "Real and False Brotherhood"]

[Text] Tehran has strongly criticized political efforts to resolve the Middle East crisis and has leveled many heavy charges against all Arab parties dealing with these efforts. It concluded that jihad is the only way to liberate Palestine, regain every inch of the occupied Arab territory, and restore the regional justice, peace, and reassurance missing since the usurpation of the first inch of Palestinian soil.

We would have accepted this criticism and these accusations had the Iranian brothers not been in the trench of the blasphemous alliance that launched and is still carrying out an unjust attack on the Muslim Arab people of Iraq. Iranian criticism and accusations could have been seriously dealt with had the Iranian brothers held to the neutrality they said they would be committed to in the struggle of sisterly Iraq against the alliance of injustice, despotism, blasphemy, and aggression. But what has happened is that our Iranian brothers deserted the trench of neutrality and headed for a trench hostile to the unity of the Iraqi people and territory, and their right to bread, medicine, and water. At many stages in the preparation and implementation of the conspiracy against Iraq, the arch satan was less brutal, if not more humane, than our Iranian brothers. Perhaps what has taken place in several central and southern Iraqi cities will remain a black page in Arab-Iranian relations, worse than the black pages history has recorded on the arch satan in its continued racial war of annihilation on the Muslim people of Iraq and against all the dignity, prestige, and pride of both Arabs and Muslims.

We are aware that jihad is the destiny of our Arab nation in the same way as it is the destiny of Muslims from the time they hoisted the banner of Islam and carried the message of enlightenment to all mankind. We are also aware that recovering every Arab and Islamic inch from our enemies is the responsibility of all Arabs and Muslims, but our Iranian brothers have ignored this Islamic brotherhood and played the darkest and most saddening and condemnable role in the Gulf crisis. What sedition has done in central and southern Iraq was bigger and more dangerous than hoped for by the enemies of Arabism and Islam, represented in the arch satan. Thus, we hope that the brothers in Iran will stop giving advice, because advice should basically come from one brother to another and should be sincere and unmotivated by rejected political reasons. We are better aware of our affairs and know who stabs us in the back and seeks to do more.

'Thousands' of Iraqis 'Flooding' Into Country

JN2507070691 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
25-26 Jul 91 p 2

[Article by P.V. Vivekanand: "Jordan—Respite and Lifeline for Iraqis]

[Text] Amman—Thousands of Iraqis, some of them seeking a respite from their war-ravaged country and others looking for refuge in the West, are flooding into Jordan, thronging rundown hotels in downtown Amman to luxurious five-star establishments as well as apartments.

"Some of them are businessmen pursuing contacts, others are seeking refuge in Europe and the United States and still many are here for a short stay," said the receptionist at a JD [Jordanian dinars] 4-a-night downtown hotel, which, like dozens around it, has been doing a booming business since mid-May when the Iraqi government lifted travel restrictions.

An Iraqi taxi-driver who identified himself only as Haj 'Umar said most of his passengers on the Baghdad-Amman route were from the Iraqi middle class and lower middle class. "They do not have much money, but still a week in Jordan is a much welcome prospect, away from the suffering in Iraq," he said. "It will be an understatement to say things are bad in Iraq," said Haj 'Umar. "Prices are skyrocketing to the extent that it will still be cheaper for someone to come to Amman and buy essential stuff, such as food and medicine," he said. Haj

'Umar said he himself was making more money by buying food and other essentials in Amman and selling them in Iraq than plying his battered red and white Pegeout on the Amman-Baghdad route.

Food prices have soared—as much as 20 times in some cases—in the Iraqi market as a result of the international sanctions imposed against the country following its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Asked whether Iraqis were fleeing their country in fear of renewed use of force by the American-led coalition against Iraq following charges that Baghdad is still withholding full disclosure of its nuclear programme and facilities, Ibrahim Musili, a Baghdad grocer, said: "We are Iraqis. We are not scared. Anyone who is scared of death is not an Arab or a Muslim."

"We have lived through eight years of war with Iran and then over seven months in tension before the Americans started the war," said Mr. Musili, as several other elderly Iraqis listening to the conversation nodded in unison. "The Americans have killed tens of thousands of Iraqis and destroyed our country. What more can they do? Kill a few thousands more?"

"They will get their retribution, sooner or later," added the grocer, who said he was visiting Jordan to meet his daughter who lives in France.

Reports from Baghdad have spoken of heavy demand for American dollars and for vehicles for the overland trip to Amman in recent days. Thursday is the deadline set by the Security Council for Iraq to provide full details of its nuclear facilities.

U.S. administration officials have warned of military strikes against Iraq's nuclear facilities which survived attacks by the American-led coalition during the Gulf war, which ended Iraq's occupation of Kuwait.

"We are happy to be in Amman for a week and do some shopping," said an Iraqi woman who gave her name as Fatimah. "At prices as they are in Iraq, we cannot afford milk and medicine for our children," said the woman as she bottle-fed a three-year-old child in the worn-out hotel lobby.

The Iraqi Government has set a ceiling of 600 Iraqi dinars per person as the amount he or she could take out of Iraq while travelling. Although it is equivalent to about $1,900 at the official rate, foreign exchange is not released by the authorities, thus effectively bringing down the exchange value of the amount to less than $100 outside Iraq.

"Border officials are lenient these days and most Iraqis bring out as much money as they can, but about 1,500 Iraqi dinars is about the average," said Haj 'Umar, the taxi driver. At the exchange rate available in Jordan, 1,500 Iraqi dinars equal around JD 150.

Unofficial sources said about 50,000 Iraqis had entered Jordan after the lifting on travel restrictions in May. The sources could not give any estimate of how many Iraqis remained in Jordan.

Ahmad Salih, an Egyptian employee at a downtown hotel, said the 30 beds laid out at two common halls at the establishment were always full, sometimes with two guests to a bed.

"Some of our guests take turns at sleeping since the number of beds is limited," said Mr. Salih. "Some others spend nights at parks and other places nearby."

Managers of expensive hotels in Amman report around 80 to 90 per cent occupancy with half of them Iraqis. "Our clients are mostly businessmen or rich Iraqis who have family reunions here," said the senior sales executive at a five-star hotel.

Mr. Salih said the average stay of an Iraqi family at his hotel was seven days. "Then they either move to apartments here or go back to Iraq," he said. "Others who are lucky to get a visa to Europe or elsewhere leave immediately."

Real estate agents affirm that there is a heavy demand for apartments despite a steep rise in rentals. "Some clients even opt for garages and servants quarters to live," said 'Amir Hammud, a broker.

"Many of those who came to my office appeared to have funds abroad, either their own bank accounts or help from family members living in Europe or the U.S.," Mr. Hammud said.

Consular officials at Western embassies in Amman say they have been deluged with visa applications from Iraqi citizens. "We have to conduct individual personal interviews and carry out a thorough scanning process before granting anyone a visa." said a senior diplomat at a European embassy. "We have the next 90 days fully occupied for interviews with Iraqi applicants for visa," he added.

Many Iraqis have also approached the United Nations agencies seeking refuge abroad, but in most cases such applications are not accepted under the parameters specified for recognitioon and approval as political refugees.

Local and international relief agencies such as the Catholic Relief Services, Caritas, are extending limited help to needy Iraqi families.

Iraqi embassy sources said the mission here was also offering help, though limited to emergency cases and situations.

Buwayz on Country's Role in Peace Conference

JN2407194791 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by correspondent Suhayl Khuri; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Khuri] Mr. Minister, you announced yesterday in a statement that you agree in principle to attend the peace conference on the Middle East. You said, however, that the issue of the Israeli occupation of the south must be resolved by Resolution 425. What is your objective in attending the peace conference?

[Buwayz] Naturally, Lebanon is a country directly involved in any solution of the Arab-Israeli cause. Lebanon is also involved in any solution of the question of Palestine and the rights of the Palestinian people, as it hosts a large number of Palestinian brothers. From this perspective, Resolutions 242 and 338, in their proposed form as a framework for this conference, could solve this issue.

There is another issue concerning Lebanon: the occupation of its territory, regarding which the Security Council issued Resolution 425 dealing specifically with this issue and defining how the Israeli army should withdraw from southern Lebanon. Therefore, Lebanon's possible participation in any international conference consists of two parts: one dealing directly with Lebanon falling under the umbrella of Resolution 425, and the other dealing with the Arab-Israeli cause under the umbrella of Resolution 242.

[Khuri] Mr. Minister, you met with the U.S. secretary of state in Cairo. Did you extract a promise or guarantee on Israel's withdrawal from the border strip?

[Buwayz] The United States wants to help Lebanon retrieve its sovereignty and independence and to restore its government's authority over all Lebanese territory. Proceeding from this, the United States is following the activities of the legitimate Lebanese authority in spreading the Army throughout the land and entrenching the capabilities of the Lebanese Army and the central government. Because the Lebanese Army recently entered the southern region, the United States has become more convinced of the need to help Lebanon regain all its territory in the south.

[Khuri] Mr. Minister, some forces in the south still refuse to surrender their weapons. How large are these forces, and how will you deal with them?

[Buwayz] I do not believe these forces are that large. Naturally, there are some who refuse to do so. What we tell them is that we are in the midst of a crucial political battle. We find ourselves in extraordinary circumstances that give Lebanon a chance to retrieve its precious south. There is a minimum level of coordination with the Lebanese Government on this issue. There is also a need to respect the political course mapped out by these possibilities. Then, if the Lebanese Government fails to retake the south, we will have some stance on this regard.

[Khuri] What are the results of your talks with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid?

[Buwayz] Secretary General 'Abd-al-Majid's visit comes within the framework of Arab contacts. It also falls within the context of his duties as secretary general of the Arab League. Therefore, it is only natural for him to listen to the opinions of Arab governments and inquire about the basic issues of interest to these governments so that they can be proposed and action taken based on them. Naturally, he will tell these governments of his contacts with the other governments. Within this context, we discussed the subject of the peace conference and several issues dealing with Lebanon on all levels, including the issue of the south, the IMF, or internal matters dealing with the Arab League.

[Khuri] Thank you, Foreign Minister Buwayz.

[Buwayz] Thank you.

Threats Against German Hostages Reported

NC2507064191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] The abductors of two German nationals seized in Beirut more than two years ago have threatened to use the language of violence and blood unless they receive information within 48 hours on the fate of two Lebanese imprisoned in Germany.

In a statement distributed to foreign news agencies in Beirut yesterday and signed by the Mujahidin for Freedom [al-mujahidun min ajl al-hurriyah], the abductors stressed that if this deadline passes without receiving the required information, they will resort to negative action, and regret by the authorities will not be helpful.

PLO's Salah Urges End to Measures Against Camps

NC2407165891 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Salah Salah chaired a meeting of the PLO political leadership in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp today following which a statement was issued calling on the Lebanese Government to end the extraordinary measures taken around the camps now that all the heavy- and medium-caliber weapons in the Sidon and Tyre camps have been handed over to the Lebanese Army in accordance with PLO's decision.

The statement added: We are completely confident that the government will take quick, positive steps to disperse the fears that accompanied the recent events, strengthen Palestinian-Lebanese relations, and lead to a discussion of the Palestinian people's social and civic rights.

In another development, Salah received (Elter Turkman), political commissioner [as heard] of the United

Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East. They discussed Palestinian needs in the wake of the recent events.

PFLP-GC Spokesman on Withdrawal From al-Damur

NC2407202191 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] In the wake of the raid the Israeli enemy forces launched on the fringes of al-Na'imah and al-Damur today, a spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] emphasized that the front no longer has bases in the al-Damur sector. The spokesman said the front withdrew its weapons in early May in accordance with the Lebanese Army deployment.

Lebanese Army Opens Fire on Israeli Planes

NC2407113091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1122 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] In the first raid of its kind on the al-Damur area, inside the limits of Greater Beirut, Israeli warplanes staged raids in two successive waves at around 1310 today on positions belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, which is led by Ahmad Jibril. The Israeli planes fired a number of air-to-surface missiles.

The Lebanese Army opened antiaircraft fire on the raiding planes.

While the Israeli planes were continuing their raides over the area, columns of smoke were seen on the hills of al-Damur and al-Na'imah. Ambulances could not enter the area because of the continued raids.

Israeli, Resistance Activity in South Detailed

NC2507111591 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Al-Qulaylah and al-Shumariyah areas came under artillery fire at dawn today. Israeli gunboats sailing off these areas took part in the shelling. Helicopters, at the same time, flew over these areas. The occupation forces also fired flares over Jba' and 'Ayn Bu-Siwar last night.

At 1100 today, enemy warplanes carried out a mock raid over Sidon and the camps, drawing antiaircraft fire.

A resistance group last night attacked a position of the Israeli occupation forces in al-Hamra'-al-Bayyadah area, using mortars. At the same time, a second group attacked another occupation forces position in al-Shumariyah. The outcome of the attacks are unknown.

Village Under Heavy Fire From Israeli Forces

NC2507082291 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Al-Mansuri village, in the western sector of southern Lebanon, this morning came under heavy artillery fire from the positions of the Israeli occupation forces on the overlooking hills. The shelling caused heavy property damage.

Al-Shar' on Proposed Early Peace Process Start

JN2407122691 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1120 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid left Damascus this morning at the conclusion of a visit of several days to the Syrian Arab Republic.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; Dr. Mustafa 'Abd-al-'Aziz Mursi, Egyptian ambassador in Damascus; the general commissioner of the boycott [on Israel]; the director general of the Arab Center for Studies on Arid Lands and Dry Areas; the chief of protocol; and senior Foreign Ministry officials.

In a predeparture statement to the SANA correspondent, 'Abd-al-Majid commented on the outcome of his visit to Syria and his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad. He said:

The outcome was positive in all aspects. It was an opportunity for me to listen to the counsel of President Hafiz al-Asad and his view of joint Arab action. I came out of this visit with very useful lessons and impressions. I feel again that the Syrian role in the peace process is central. There is no doubt that the Syrian stance has promoted this role.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' was asked about the positive Syrian reply and its repercussions worldwide, and whether he believes it is good to start the peace process shortly, especially since Baker set a specific deadline in a recent statement on the Israeli reply. He answered: At this stage, following Secretary Baker's recent tour of the region, we are working to convene the peace conference as soon as possible and to cancel the many Israeli noes we have heard for decades. He added that conferences, particularly peace conferences, have their procedures and rules, both in regard to their opening sessions or the meetings of their subcommittees and the discussions held at these conferences. We in Syria follow these rules and procedures, and we expect other parties to respect and honor them.

Foreign Minister al-Shar' added that Syria's positive reply to President Bush's proposals confused Israeli leaders and caught them in flagrant contradictions and paradoxes because, first of all, they came to realize that the proposed peace means removal of their noes one after the other; and second, because, for years, they grew accustomed to deceiving and misleading public opinion, especially in Israel and the United States, claiming that Syria is hostile to peace.

The foreign minister added that over the past 20 years, Syria, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, has not abandoned the pursuit of a just, comprehensive peace. He said Israel has always been the one to bar the doors of peace while Syria has continued to seek peace and to call for the implementation of UN resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338, to bring about a comprehensive, just settlement within the framework of an international peace conference leading to the recovery of the occupied Arab territories and the guaranteeing of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, proceeding from the principle of the non-acquisition of territory by force or war, as stipulated in Resolution 242.

The foreign minister added that a radical change in position on an honorable and comprehensive peace is what is really required from Israel above anyone else.

Al-Shar' was also asked: Some Arab states have agreed with President Mubarak's proposal to halt the settlements in return for an end to the Arab boycott on Israel. Thus, what is Syria's position despite the fact that Israel plans to build four new settlements in the occupied Golan Heights? The minister said: We in Syria, as well as in the Arab states and the European Community, consider the settlements in the occupied territories illegal. They conflict with the UN Security Council resolutions, and consequently, they constitute a major obstacle to peace. From this premise, we call for the application of UN Security Council resolutions on settlements.

Al-Shar' added: Israel's rejection, of course, clearly and openly shows that there are no intentions to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Asked about the Arab League secretary general's visit and the results of the talks, al-Shar' said: His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad assured Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid of Syria's unlimited support for the Arab League in reinforcing its role to revive and reactivate its institutions to serve Arab solidarity and the unity of the Arab position.

Assembly Speaker on Conference, Nation's Role

JN2407120091 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1000 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Doha, 24 Jul (WAKH)—Syrian People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah has emphasized that his country observes constants and principles and cannot deviate from them. He added that Syria cannot be an obstacle to any peace process leading to real peace, not surrender. He noted that in line with this, President al-Asad's reply to U.S. proposals was in keeping with legitimate international constants and Resolutions 242 and 338, which apply to all the parties to the conflict.

Qaddurah said that Syria's positive reply foiled the attempts to insinuate that Syria would oppose the U.S. President's proposals. We favor the peace conference, provided that it is not a one-time festival whose role will end afterward. We want it to be under the joint auspices of the United States and the Soviet Union and the supervision of the United Nations, based on the resolutions of international legitimacy.

In an interview with the Qatari newspaper AL-RAYAH today, Qaddurah added: Syria believes that if we are not

able to really bring about the liberation process, then we should be able to safeguard our rights.

Asked about some parties' attempts to underestimate the Syrian role, Qaddurah said that no one can do it because Syria is the one to set its own role. It does not seek to magnify it, but is looking for a just, balanced solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Qaddurah asserted that the Damascus Declaration has created a shining, ever-present example following the pitch darkness that engulfed the Arab nation as a result of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

On the dimensions of the Syrian role in Lebanon, Qaddurah said that Syria entered Lebanon not to unify it with Syria, but to help it unify itself. We entered Lebanon, he said, and we did not cancel the Lebanese flag. Therefore, the Syrian presence in Lebanon is not a foreign presence and cannot be compared with the occupying Israeli army. As for our withdrawal from Lebanon, when the Lebanese Government tells us to withdraw, we will.

Asked about recent statements by some Palestinian officials concerning a Middle East settlement, Qaddurah said: We regard the Palestine question as the central cause of Syria, which has given up thousands of martyrs for the cause. We also think that the Palestinian people are responsible for their cause. We are not against integrating any Palestinian idea into the cause, provided that constants are not violated.

Belgian Foreign Minister Eyskens Continues Visit

Confers With al-Shar'

JN2407161391 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Damascus—A session of talks was held between Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens at the Foreign Ministry at noon today. [passage omitted]

The talks centered on the peace process, achievement of a just, comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict within the framework of the international legitimacy based on UN resolutions—Resolutions 242 and 338 in particular—as well as on relations between Syria and Belgium and between Syria and the European Community, and ways to promote them in all fields. The talks also dealt with the situation in Lebanon, the steps taken by the Lebanese Government to spread its authority over all the Lebanese soil, and the Damascus Declaration.

Received by al-Asad

JN2407174591 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] At 1930 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Syrian Ambassador to Belgium Siba Nasir, and the Belgian ambassador in Damascus.

Peace Efforts Discussed

JN2507052191 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad last night received Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Syrian Ambassador to Belgium Miss Siba Nasir, and the Belgian ambassador in Damascus. The talks dealt with the situation in the region and current efforts to launch a peace process leading to a just and comprehensive peace.

Mr. Eyskens expressed the European Community's concern about peace and appreciation of Syria's positive position on the peace process. The president welcomed the European role in the move to bring about a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Afghanistan

Mujahidin Kill 30 Kabul Troops in Paktia Battle

BK2507040691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] According to reports, fierce fighting has continued between the mujahidin and Kabul regime troops in different parts of Afghanistan. The mujahidin attacked (Tila Neazi) and Sawar Court in Paktia Province, killing 30 Kabul regime troops and destroyed many security posts. In another incident, the mujahidin launched a sudden attack on a caravan of Kabul regime troops in (Mardan) Province, killing six soldiers and injuring many.

Mujahidin Groups Still Prefer Military Solution

BK2407105391 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 Jul 91 p 12

[By Murtaza Malik]

[Text] Peshawar, July 14—While the two superpowers and their allies involved in the 12-year-old conflict in Afghanistan are vehemently pursuing various options for a peaceful settlement of the Afghan issue, the hardliners in the Resistance have stunned the peacemakers with a fresh resolve to force a military solution.

The three major Resistance parties issuing the joint statement on the subject are Hezbe-e Eslami of Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar, Jamiat-e Eslami Oddin Rabbani and Etehad-e Eslami Afghanistan of Prof Abdul Rasool Sayyaf. Interestingly the Engineer and the other two had parted ways at the AIG [Afghan Interim Government] level where Rasool Sayyaf is the Prime Minister and Prof Rabbani a member of his Cabinet. Hekmatyar had pulled out of the Interim Government long ago and since then he has mostly been operating inside Afghanistan as he was neither covered by the AIG policies nor decisions. But this joint communique coming at a time when the initiatives for a political settlement had reportedly started taking some concrete shape, was described as a significant development.

The statement reiterated that Jehad will continue till final victory and that the so-called proposal for the political solution of the Afghani issue was the brainchild of the enemies of Jehad who wanted to undo the gains of Jehad. It claimed that the continuous victories of Mojahedin in the military field at Khowst, Takhar and Kounduz had frustrated the enemies of Jehad and by bringing impracticable solutions they just wanted to thwart Mojahedin's military victory.

It claimed that the talks for a political solution of the problem were aimed at engaging Mujahidin in political field and diverting their attention from Jehad. Mojahedin, the communique added, will never forget the crimes of the rulers in Kabul.

The communique explained that the vested interests who wanted to further their nefarious designs engineered the proposal for a political solution of the problem in order to guarantee their interests.

"Mojahedin and their new generations will cross all such barriers and continue their sacred struggle till the achievement of their final goal", the communique added.

The communique stressed on a number of issues including estbalishment of an Islamic government in Afghanistan at the hands of Mojahedin and giving no privilege to the communists and the westernised Afghan individuals. It advocated the sole right of Mojahedin for forming the future government in Afghanistan. The communique rejected the proposal of a coalition government in Afghanistan further expressing the resolve of continuing Jehad. It said that a justifiable solution of the Afghan conflict was culminated in the unconditional removal of the Kabul regime. What must have surprised some of the Afghans themselves was the timing of the communique.

The Afghan sources said that the three leaders had been in contact on this vital subject while at the same time they had not been averse to the efforts for negotiated settlement. Some of the latvest moves towards the political solution and involvement of one or two hardliners in the recently held dialogues, might have created an impression which the three leaders might have not liked. It was therefore to undo that impression that they decided to come out with a statement which should be an indicator to the events to come. That however is not likely to affect the efforts for a political settlement which in all probability will continue at different forums.

Bangladesh

Seven Killed in Tribal Insurgent Shooting

BK2407160891 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] More details have been received about the killing of workers by so-called Shanti Bahini in Rangamati District yesterday. Our Rangamati correspondent says six people were killed on the spot and two others injured when the tribal insurgents opened fire at Tematha area of Langadu upazila [subdistrict]. One of the injured later died in the hospital. The killing took place when the victims were cutting bamboos. Chairman of Rangamati Local Government Council Gautam Dewan has condemned the brutal killing.

100 Students Injured as Clashes Continue

BK2507044091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0436 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Dhaka, July 25 (AFP)—Some 100 people were injured, some of them seriously, during a shootout

between rival student groups in a western Bangladesh district, press reports said here Thursday.

The gunbattle at Rajshahi University between student wings of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and opposition groups sent students fleeing from the campus Wednesday, the reports said, adding that the fighting erupted after BNP activists attacked a dormitory housing supporters of rival Chatra Moitree.

Residents said by telephone Thursday that police were patrolling the town after clashes spread outside the campus.

Twelve seriously injured people, mostly student activists, were being treated at a local hospital for bullet wounds.

A Dhaka newspaper said 61 educational institutions across Bangladesh had been ordered shut during the past four months of continuing student violence, mainly involving students wings of the BNP and its archrival, the Awami League.

Students have traditionally played a key role in Bangladeshi politics.

India

Finance Minister Details Proposed Budget

BK2407144491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1345 GMT 24 Jul 91

["Special Budget Bulletin"]

[Text] The highlights of the union budget for 1991-92 are: personal income tax rate structure, including surcharge, remains unchanged; no change in the rates of wealth tax; one more opportunity to the tax evaders to disclose their unaccounted incomes along with the new scheme for the mobilization of black money; petrol up by over two rupees per liter; cooking gas cylinder to cost over 11 rupees more; no increase in price of diesel; kerosene for domestic use cheaper by about 22 paise per liter; luxury items such as refrigerators, air conditioners, color TV's, VCR's, VCP's and cars to be expensive; smokers to pay more; food processing and agro-based products exempted from excise duty; fertilizers to be costlier; the subsidy on sugar goes; sugar through public distribution system will cost 85 paise more per kilogram; income tax rebate to contractual schemes floated by public housing corporations; standard newsprint to be exempted from import duty; two new schemes to attract foreign exchange; a national foundation is to be set up to look after the interests of the children of families affected by communal riots.

Defense outlay is up by 600 crore [six billion] rupees.

The new tax rate proposals to yield 2,500 crore rupees to the center. The budget for 1991-92 shows a deficit of 7,719 crore rupees.

Abolition of sugar subsidy, withdrawal of price and movement controls for low analysis fertilizers coupled with 40 percent increase in the price of all other fertilizers, increase taxes on petrol, LPG [Liquified Petroleum Gas], refrigerators, air conditioners, color TV's, cars and cigarettes are the main highlights of the union budget which leaves the personal income tax and wealth tax rates untouched.

Presenting the union budget for 1991-92 in Parliament a short while ago, the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, announced two new schemes to attract foreign exchange and investments from abroad. He also came out with five new initiatives for the welfare of backward classes and the workers facing adverse consequences because of modernization, to take care of the children of families affected by communal riots, for enabling the youth to promote national integration and the promotion of South-South cooperation.

Dr. Manmohan Singh said taking both direct and indirect taxes into account, the net gain to the government at the center in the current year is estimated at 2,005 crore rupees and with this the budgetary deficit in the current year is estimated at 7,719 crore rupees. The revenue deficit will be 1,385 crore rupees and the fiscal deficit 37,727 crore rupees. The direct taxes will yield 2,139 crore rupees of which 97 crore rupees will accrue to the states and 2,042 crore rupees to the center.

Dr. Singh said the proposals in regard to custom duties will entail a net revenue loss of 510 crore rupees in the current year, while the excise duties are estimated to yield additional revenue of 988 crore rupees in the remaining part of the current financial year. Of these, 515 crore rupees will be share of the states, while 473 crore rupees will be retained by the center. The changes in customs and excise duties will come into effect from tomorrow, while the duties of petroleum products and fertilizers come into effect from tonight itself.

Contrary to all expectations, the finance minister has chosen to keep the personal income tax rate structure, including the surcharge, unchanged. Dr. Singh said that he has not added to the burden to the tax payer is in itself a relief.

No change has also been made in the rates of wealth tax.

The inconme tax exemption in respect of earning from races, including horse races, which is at present 5,000 rupees will be withdrawn. Income tax will be deducted at source on the payment of commission and interest rate by banks on time deposits and on withdrawals from the national savings scheme. To minimize the inconvenience for small depositors, tax will be deducted at source only in respect of payments which exceed 2,500 rupees a year.

A new scheme to moilize black money for achieving social objectives, under which any person will be allowed to make deposits to the National Housing Bank on or before the 30th of November this year, has been announced.

Forty percent of such deposits will be deducted and set apart as a special levy which will form a fund in the National Housing Bank. This fund will be utilized for financing slum clearance and low costing housing for the poor. The depositor will be allowed to draw the balance amount in one or more installments and there will be no locked-in period for such deposits. Persons making such deposits will not be required to disclose the source of funds from which the deposits are made. The finance minister assured that these deposits will be provide immunity from inquiry and investigation.

Dr. Manmohan Singh also announced one more opportunity to the tax evaders to voluntarily disclose their unaccounted incomes. The provision, under which the income tax commissioner can raise objections to an application to the Settlement Commission, through which an assessee declares his undisclosed income and wealth, is deleted.

Tax rebate will be extended to the contractual schemes floated by public housing corporations such as HUDCO [Housing and Urban Development Corporation] and state housing boards on the lines of the home loan account schemes of the National Housing Bank. The tax rebate will also be available in relation to installments and repayment of loans toward cost of land and also in cases where the house was purchased or built before 1 April 1979.

As part of efforts to boost software exports, the finance minister has extended tax concessions under the Income Tax Act [ITA] to the export of software.

Expenditure incurred in new approved hotels in hilly and other remote areas will be exempted from expenditure tax for a period of 10 years. The basic deduction of 10,000 rupees, now available under the ITA in respect of long-term capital gains, will be increased to 15,000 rupees. Dr. Singh also proposed that any loss on transfer of capital assets will be set off against gain from the transfer of another capital asset.

Dr. Manmohan Singh said to curb conspicuous consumption, excise duty rates will be increased on refrigerators, air conditioners, audio and video cassette tapes, color televisions, VCR's VCP's and cars. The excise duty on refrigerators will be up from 200 to 800 rupees, depending on the capacity. In the case of air conditioners, there will be a sharp hike, varying from 2,000 to 30,000 rupees. The color television sets will cost more by 500 to 750 rupees a set. The excise duty on color picture tubes will also go up. The finance minister has exempted black and white television sets from excise duty and shifted the burden to their picture tubes. VCR's and VCP's will be dearer by 400 rupees and 250 rupees. The people who have plans to buy new cars, will have to take into account the 10 percent increase proposed on the excise duty on cars. The duty on taxi's however remains unchanged.

The smokers of cigarettes and bidis [Indian variety of cigarette] will have to pay more. Pan masala [chewing tobacco] consumers will have to spend more.

The finance minister has proposed an increase of excise duty on free-sale sugar from the present level of 50 rupees to 71 rupees a quintal. He has however made it clear that there is no increase in the excise duty on levy sugar which is sold through the public distribution system. Khandsari [unrefined] sugar will be excluded from the list of items chargeable to addition excise duty. The finance minister also proposed the immediate abolition of the subsidy on sugar. The excise duty on molasses will also go up. The excise duty on two-wheelers with engine capacity exceeding 50 cc but not exceeding 75 cc has been reduced by 5 percent. Energy-efficient chulas [ovens] will be exempt from excise duty.

With effect from this evening, low-analysis fertilizer, such as calcium-ammonium-nitrate, ammonium chloride, ammonium sulfate, and sulfate of potash will be free from price and movement controls. There will also be an increase of 40 percent on an average in the prices of other fertilizers.

The price of domestic LPG [liquified petroleum gas] and petrol is up by 20 percent. The prices of other petroleum products, excluding diesel and kerosene for non-industrial use, will be up by 10 percent. Dr. Manmohan Singh has brought relief to the domestic consumers of kerosene by reducing its price by 10 percent.

To give a massive thrust to food processing and agro-based industries, the agro-based products, such as sausage, butter, skimmed milk powder, vegetable oils, dried vegetables, preparations of meat and fish are exempted totally from excise duties. The finance minister expressed the hope that this will lead to some reduction in consumer prices of such products. Five specified anti-epileptic formulations will get full exemption from excise duty. The cottage, Khadi, and village industries will also get excise duty concessions on different products. The standard newsprint will be exempted from import duty. The monetary limit of duty-free import of photographic goods by accredited cameramen will be doubled from the present level of 30,000 rupees.

Funding of social science research will get tax concessions and authors and publishers will get incentives. The finance minister proposed 25 percent deduction from the professional income of authors of textbooks in Indian languages, which will be available for a period of five years. Similarly, a deduction of 20 percent of profits from publication of books will also be available for a period of five years. On dividend income, the proposed rate of tax will be 10 percent as against the existing rate of 25 percent. On long-term capital gains, it will be 10 percent as against the existing 45 percent.

In a major attempt to attract larger inflows of foreign exchange, Dr. Manmohan Singh has proposed two new schemes. Under the first scheme, remittances in foreign exchange can be made to any person in the country. This

will not be subjected to gift tax. The finance minister said absolute immunity will be provided for such remittances. The scheme will come into immediate effect and will be open till the 30th of November this year. The details of the scheme will be soon announced by the Reserve Bank of India. Under the second scheme, the State Bank of India will issue India Development Bonds in the denomination of U.S. dollars. These can be purchased by nonresident Indians [NRI's] under their overeseas corporate bodies. There will be no ceiling for investments in these bonds which will have a maturity period of five years. Interest from the bonds which are fully transferable among the NRI's will be exempt from income tax. The bonds will also be exempt from wealth tax till maturity. They can also be gifted to resident Indians who will be provided with amnesty and immunity, which will be available only to the first resident donee.

Outlining the welfare aspects of the budget, the finance minister said five new initiatives have been decided. First, setting up of a corporation for the welfare of the backward classes, which the Congress-I manifesto had promised to do during the first 100 days. Secondly, a national renewal fund will be established in the substantial corpus to ensure that the cost of technical change and modernization of the productive apparatus does not fall on the workers. This fund will also protect the workers from adverse effects of technological transformation. The third relates to the care of children and families affected by communal riots, as such children grow up into disgruntled adulthood and fall easy prey to antisocial propaganda and fundamentalist forces. For the welfare and education of such children, a national foundation for communal harmony is proposed to be set up, to which the government will make a substantial contribution this year. The fourth initiative is a scheme to enable the young people of each part of the country to go in large numbers and work for short periods in other parts of the country so that they can mix with people of different regions and languages. The fifth initiative relates to the promotion of South- South cooperation.

The finance minister said the single largest component of nonplan expenditure is the allocation of defense and no attempt at containing such expenditure can succeed if defense is excluded. At the same time, he said, it is essential not to compromise national security in a bid to economize in defense expenditure. The government, therefore, must seek to limit nonplan expenditure without diluting the efficiency and effectiveness of the defense services.

$6.28 Billion for Defense

BK2407150491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] The [1991-92] budget has earmarked 16,350 crore [163.5 billion] rupees for the current year, an increase of 600 crore [6 billion] rupees from the revised estimates for 1990-91.

[Paris AFP in English at 1348 GMT reports: "Defence expenditure was put at 6.28 billion dollars, a hefty fall from last year's levels in dollar terms but a slight rise in rupee terms."]

Says Budget Not Inflationary

BK2407160491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Soon after the presentation of the budget in Parliament, the finance minister told our correspondent, Sebastian Robert, that the impact of the tax proposals on the prices will be very minimal.

[Begin Finance Minister Manmohan Singh recording] The budgetary strategy that I have oulined should provide a strong discouragement to inflationary expectations in our country. For the first time in many years, we have a budget which brings about a sharp reduction in all measures of budget deficit. We are not going to pursue fiscal and monetary policies which would permit people to raise prices. The strategy of resource mobilization that I have adopted is designed specifically to avoid imposing burdens on the poorer sections of the community. I have rolled back by 50 percent the increase in the price of kerosene. All these things that have been said in the press that I have accepted some hidden conditionalities, that this budget has been prepared at the behest of the IMF, I think that is totally untrue. [end recording]

That was Dr. Manmohan Singh, finance minister.

Reacting to the budget proposals, opposition leaders described it as inflationary and against the interest of the common man. Congress-I leaders, however, said the budget is a step toward achieving social justice and an effort toward fulfilling the party manifesto.

Opposition Leaders Criticize

BK2507050091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] The union budget proposals have evoked various response in different quarters. Many oppostion leaders have described the proposal as inflationary, antipoor and reflecting a surrender to the wishes of the International Monetary Fund. The Congress-I and its allies, on the other hand, view the budget as growth-oriented and designed to grapple with the economic crisis facing the country.

Commenting on the proposals, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mr. L.K. Advani, said the increase in the price of petroleum products will fuel further inflation. He said the salaried class, particularly of the lower-middle income group is totally (?let) down by the budgetary proposals. The former finance minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinah, and the former petroleum minister, Mr. S.P. Malavia, both of the Samajawadi Janata Party, have described it as inflationary, while the Janata Dal leader, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, has described it as antipeople. The former railway minister and Haryana

Vikas Party leader, Mr. Bansi Lal said the budget is antifarmers and antilaborers. Mr. K.I. Unnikrishnan of the Congress-S has criticized the budget, saying all burdens proposed in it will fall on the common men. Mrs. Dilkumari Bhandari of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad has described the budget as average. She does not think the burden will be much. Mr. Vishwa Bandhu Gupta, MP and the president of the Indian small and medium newspapers society, has hailed the budget as good for the newspaper industry.

Various chambers of commerce and industry have, however, welcomed the budget proposals. The president of the Punjab, Haryana, Delhi Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Mr. S.S. Qamar, has described the budget as realistic. The ASSOCHAM [Associated Chamber of Commerce] president, Mr. Abhijit Majumadar, felt that the substantial increase in cooperate tax rates could be avoided by widening the tax net over the sectors which enjoyed tax-free incomes. The chairman of the engineering export promotion council, Mr. J.S. Bhasin, said the decision to exempt the NRI [nonresident Indian] remittances from gift tax will definitely lead to a greater inflow of foreign exchange. Welcoming the rise in the sugar prices, the president of the Indian sugar mill association, Mr. S.B. Balasubramaniam, said it will help the crippling sugar industry. Share prices in the country's major stock exchanges reacted favorably to the budget proposals and to the new industrial policy.

Candidate Killed, Election Countermanded in Punjab

BK2507100091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] In Punjab, election in yet another assembly constituency has been countermanded, following the killing of a candidate last night. According to an official spokesman, some unidentified gunmen shot dead the independent candidate, Mrs. Kuldip Kaur, seeking election from Raja Sansi assembly constituency in Amritsar District. With today's incident, the assembly elections in 14 constituencies have been countermanded. Besides, elections of two of the 13 parliamentary constituencies have also been countermanded.

Youth Congress-I General Secretary Kidnapped

BK2507055691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, one of the general secretaries of the Youth Congress-I Committee, Mr. Farooq Hussain, was kidnapped by the Nxalites [Maoist Guerrillas] in (Gurechallapalli) village in Medak District last evening. The District superintendent of police told our Hyderabad correspondent that the kidnappers have demanded the release of three militants. One of them is involved in 12 murder cases and is now in judicial custody. One was already released and the third, whom the Naxalite wants to be released, was not arrested.

Militants Fire at Bus in Punjab, 5 Killed

BK2507055891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] In Punjab, five bus passengers and five militants are among 17 persons killed in separate incidents since last evening. According to an official spokesman, some militants opened fire at a running bus near village, (Maman) killing five passengers and injuring another five. The ill-fated bus was on its way from (Bikebind) to Amritsar. Elsewhere in the state, unidentified gunmen shot dead three persons in Ludhiana District and one each in Jullundur and Sangrur Districts. Meanwhile, security forces have arrested nine militnats during the raid in Patiala, Faridkot and Ferozepore Districts.

Iran

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Criticizes U.S. Peace Efforts

NC2507090491 Paris AFP in English 0856 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Tehran, 25 July (AFP)—Iran's leader late Wednesday criticized the present U.S.-brokered Middle East peace efforts, saying they were prejudiced against Palestinians and Islam.

"The peace efforts could be prejudiced against Islam and Moslems and ridicule the rights of the Palestinian people," Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said in a statement published after a council of ministers meeting.

The report added that Iranian officials were "carefully following the questions concerning the Middle East peace process."

Iran has close ties to Syria, one of the principal parties involved in the process, and has criticized Damascus for allegedly withholding information about its agreements with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Tehran has never recognized Israel's right to exist and opposes every solution which would lead to a compromise with the Jewish state.

Cabinet 'Anxiety' Over Peace Plans

LD2407221491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 24 Jul 91

[Excerpt] In the cabinet meeting held on Thursday [as heard] afternoon in the presence of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the president, the minister of culture and Islamic guidance first submitted a report about the cultural issues of the country, the cultural policies of the government, and the activities carried out by responsible organizations in this field. [passage omitted]

The minister of post, telegraph, and telephone then submitted a report about the mechanization of national

elections. After discussions, the cabinet decided that studies in this field should continue.

Reports regarding peace in the Middle East were discussed at the meeting. The Cabinet expressed its anxiety that the said efforts may end up harming Islam and Muslim nations and weakening the rights of the Palestinian nation, and lead to the imposition of incorrect decisions and the presence of foreigners in the region. It decided that the issues should be closely studied and carefully followed up.

Habibi on Syria, U.S. Peace Plan, Iraq

LD2407160191 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1705 GMT 23 Jul 91

[News conference with First Vice President Hasan Habibi; correspondents not identified; in Tehran on 23 July—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] Mr. Habibi. Considering the fact that America's peace plan has been accepted by the Syrian Government, please tell us what is the clear stance of the Islamic Republic Government on this?

[Habibi] As yet we do not exactly know what Syria has accepted. Our Syrian friends should of course inform us of what they have accepted as the definition of peace, whether it is the plan the United States has proposed or whether Syria has accepted it on certain conditions. In any case, we must wait to receive the information.

[Correspondent] Mr. Habibi, considering the [words indistinct] compromise between the Arabs and Israel, what effect would this compromise have on global developments? My other question is about the POWs. How many POWs do we have in Iraq at present? What measures has the Islamic Republic taken for their return?

[Habibi] Regarding what is termed as compromise, the Arab countries should, in any case, make up their minds and declare which part of the proposals they want to accept. One scenario is that the present Middle East situation is acceptable to the Arab countries. That is tantamount to denying all the rights of the Palestinians. In that case, the situation in the Middle East would remain as it is. Perhaps that might evoke certain reactions from the people of Palestine and those who believe in the goal of the liberation of Palestine.

Another situation that may occur is that certain rights of the Palestinian people could be partially accepted. In that case, the position of the Arab countries would be different to that at present. In any case, we should see what is put forward as a plan and is discussed. It is not clear yet what has been proposed. Whether Israel would retain all her present positions or whether she would accept what the United States has ostensibly proposed as a plan, and what Syria has proposed. Those are the points that we should know, in the present circumstances, so that we could say what our position would be.

Regarding our POWs in Iraq, as His Excellency Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also remarked in the interview he gave in Chahar-Mahal va Bakhtiari, in the past talks we have had with the Iraqis we gave them a list of 5,000 POWs and we set forth the information we had regarding this matter. We asked the Iraqis to provide us with clear and precise answers regarding this information. We still have not received their response to see whether out of the 5,000 POWs—about whom we have quite considerable information—how many of them are still in Iraq, how many of those who are in Iraq do not wish to return to their country, how many of them were in Iraq before but have since left Iraq and gone to other countries and do not wish to return to Iran, and, God forbid, how many of them have been martyred or are missing.

We have asked the Iraqis to provide us with this information. During the period when we had greater discussion with them—before the recent events, when talks were still going on—they had promised to provide us with the information they possessed and to clearly tell us the details about every one of them. However, so far, we still do not have this information. We hope to receive this information so that the issue can be clarified.

[Correspondent] My next question is about the need for stricter control along the country's eastern borders. In view of the stress laid on this matter during the visit by the head of the Khorasan Province judicial branch and the proposal made on a joint project with Pakistan to create coordination in the fight against the drug-traffickers and bandits, could you please explain what the government's view on this issue is and do you have any particular plan?

[Habibi] In general along the borders and particularly along the country's eastern borders, which are the crossing points of notorious drug-traffickers, a discussion has existed for many years about whether we should increase security along these borders. Border security can be increased by three or four different means. One of these means is the creation of physical obstacles and barriers—that is, by erecting walls, barbed wire fences, or similar obstacles. Of course, this method is worthy of consideration and will be effective. But the drug-traffickers and their ilk, who have relatively great facilities for movement, can find other ways, bearing in mind there are various natural hiding places in those regions including the mountains and valleys. The smugglers can, therefore, infiltrate the country rapidly; and by the time they enter the Kevir [Iran's central desert] region, it would be highly difficult, if not impossible, to capture them. The law enforcement forces should be strengthened there, a task which was begun some time ago and has had some positive results. There should also be cooperation between the two neighboring countries. Such cooperation with Pakistan has started; and at any rate this cooperation should continue until we achieve success in this field. That is, we should have intelligence cooperation and cooperation between the law enforcement forces on both sides of the border. Iran should also

strengthen the law enforcement forces inside the country. Creation of obstacles and barriers can also help this matter.

Another plan, which was implemented in the Sistan va Baluchestan province, was relocation of some border villages. These were not real villages, they were hideouts for smugglers and were, as it were, relocated further inside the country. As a result, the villages—which had in fact been turned into centers for exchange of smuggled goods or bases for the contraband materials and drug-traffickers—were uprooted. These are the measures undertaken for some time and will continue, God willing.

[Correspondent] What are the views of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the creation of the U.S. Rapid Response Forces in Turkey, pursuing particular commitments within the framework of America's security plan?

[Habibi] The true aim of the Rapid Deployment Forces is to carry out the political and military decisions of major states and big powers. In other words, it becomes their operating agent. Our view on this is not positive. It is clear that we believe it causes unrest on Iranian borders. We basically oppose the presence of foreign forces and consider it against our national interests and national and regional security.

[Correspondent] Forgive me, but has Iran announced its stance recently?

[Habibi] Well, I am saying the above for the time being, and if it becomes necessary to announce a more explicit or clearer view, then naturally the Supreme National Security Council will announce it. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Habibi, certain sums are being collected from people by Tehran's municipality under the term: contributions [khod-yari]. What are the rules and regulations behind these collections and how do you evaluate their undesirable consequences on the economy of the country?

[Habibi] The truth is that we have two or three regulations that fall under the term: contribution—which is what the municipality collects from the people (and which raises the issue of direct links between the mayor and the people). The municipality has certain laws which were not being implemented in the past but which the mayor is now implementing. [words indistinct] The municipality is implementing the law. Moreover, the authorities are being treated in the same way as other people by the municipality when it comes to obtaining work-completion certificates on public buildings. [passage omitted] To obtain our work-completion certificates then, the municipality should be able to collect some dues in accordance with its own rules. [passage omitted]

In any case, if the term contribution exists, it is an illegal term, but if the municipality is implementing the law, well then that is the law.

Now I do not know if this has undesirable consequences—this has to be studied. But it seems that this is mostly affecting those who have money and who complain that they are being charged at a high rate. [passage omitted]

I think that, in any case, these wealthy people who are increasing their facilities should be paying the city.

Iran Seeking 'Clarifications' From Syria

NC2507065891 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran has asked Syria to submit clarifications concerning the content of its answer to the U.S. proposals and warned the Arab states against accepting any peace plan unless it serves Palestinian interests.

Meanwhile, the TEHRAN TIMES has criticized the Arab countries, especially Egypt and Saudi Arabia, for making serious concessions by proposing to end the Arab economic boycott of Israel in return for Israel's suspension of the building of settlements in the occupied territories. The newspaper noted that Israel has not retreated one step from its previous stands.

Paper Assails Peace Talks With Israel

LD2507085991 Tehran IRNA in English 0744 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Tehran, 25 July, IRNA—The Persian daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said in a commentary Thursday that the U.S. and Israel are playing as protagonist and antagonist in a peace scenario for the Middle East written by Washington.

The daily's commentary referred to Syria's acceptance of Washington's pre-conditions for Middle East peace talks saying in part: "The U.S. and Israel are acting as pro and cons according to a previously written scenario, so that together they will get the highest possible concessions from the Arab reactionaries and thereby also justify U.S.'s extravagant aids to Israel...."

"What on earth has made the reactionary Arab heads of state so wretched and miserable in their encounter with Israel? Muslims will never bring themselves into tolerating such wretched humiliations. Would the more than one billion world Muslims agree to the treacherous peace initiative of Washington with such humiliation of the reactionary heads of Arab states? This initiative is a treason against Muslim nations and Arabs and Islam for that matter...."

"The Muslim world is now facing a big threat which would demand their vigilance and tactfulness. It is necessary that the (U.S.) device be thwarted in any

possible way.... What the Arab governments have agreed to is not valid as the decision of their peoples. The ultimate word of (the Muslim) nations is that Israel should be done away with."

Commentary Examines Baker's Israeli Talks

LD2407193591 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1652 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] In his recent trip, Baker visited Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and occupied Palestine, having talks with the officials of these countries on the details of a U.S. proposed peace conference. In comparison with his previous Middle East trips, Baker's recent trip had special characteristics. It was a trip which came immediately following Syria's positive response to U.S. proposals. As such, it enjoyed a bright perspective, at least on the part of the Arab Governments on their acceptance of direct talks with the Zionist regime. Meanwhile, the most important link in the chain of Baker's visit was his visit to occupied Palestine and his talks with the heads of the Zionist regime. Already having acquired the agreement of the Arab countries—Syria, Egypt, and Jordan—the United States is only in need of the Zionist regime to translate into practice its ideas on solving the Middle East crisis. Having fully realized the importance of his trip to occupied Palestine, Baker already tabled a proposal—through Egypt—on lifting the Arab trade boycott in return for a halt to building settlements on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He did so in an effort to enhance the chances of success for the U.S. plans by giving Israel an added incentive for a positive response and, on the other hand, by preserving the remainder of the territories in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from the planned settlement of Jewish migrants. Despite the fact that the Zionist regime was waiting for 43 years for such a moment and despite the fact that it heads said that the middle east crisis can be solved only when the regions Arab community accepted its illegitimate regime, it showed no haste, during talks with Baker, to react to the change of stands by the Arab Governments. Indeed, they have left their final response for the coming days. [passage omitted]

Some optimistic analysts in the Arab world believe that now that Israel has achieved most of its demands there is no reason for her to give a negative response to the United States. At this stage, the Zionist regime is gaining two main benefits from the U.S. style solution to the Middle East crisis. First, the Arab Governments have now yielded to direct talks without any preconditions. Second, the Arabs have declared their preparedness to lift the economic boycott against the Zionist regime before the talks have even begun. Thus, the Arab governments are opening their tantalizing markets to that regime. This means establishing economic ties with it, which brings in its wake the political domination of the Zionists. But, realistic analysts in the Arab world have rejected such overoptimistic analyses. They believe that continuing such a miserable trend would lead to the Arabs's downfall. They say that to forget the root cause of the Middle East crisis—that is the occupation of the Palestinian country and making several million innocent people refugees—and to turn to other issues, such as building settlements on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as the legal status of the Golan Heights, or even the representation of the people of Palestine—which, even from the U.S. point of view, that staunch supporter of Israel, it is undebatable and that in these cases the interpretation of the Zionist regime is illegal—will have no happy ending. [passage omitted]

Deployment of Forces in Turkey Questioned

LD2407143891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0953 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The first political commentary for today will be on the formation of Rapid Deployment Forces [RDF] on Turkish soil.

While the countries of the region are opposing the stationing of NATO's Rapid Deployment Forces on Turkish soil, with Belgium joining these forces, the grounds for the formation of these forces are gradually being prepared. These forces will be about 3,000 strong and will be based in the Turkish town of Silopi, near the Iraqi border. About 900 of these forces will be Turkish and the rest will be made up of forces from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Holland, and Belgium. The command of these forces will be shared jointly between senior Turkish officers and the multinational forces. These forces were first to have begun their mission under the name, Poised Hammer, but changed their name to peacekeeping forces following certain reactions in the region and inside Turkey.

After the withdrawal of the multinational forces from northern Iraq, the RDF has been given the responsibility, outwardly at least, of maintaining security in the Kurdish inhabited regions and preventing military action by the Iraqi regime in this zone. But, in any case, in spite of appearances, there are doubts about the true motives behind the establishment of such a force. In this connection, following the Turkish Government's decision to agree to the stationing of these forces on Turkish soil, political groups inside and outside the Turkish legislature have expressed their opposition to this and have termed it a violation of Turkey's sovereignty.

After giving permission for the use of the Incerlik air base against Iraqi targets during the Persian Gulf war, the Turkish Government adopted a more hostile and practical stance toward its confrontation with the Baghdad regime. And now, with the stationing of these forces whose main mission, outwardly, is to confront Iraq's military provocations in the north of that country, the same trend is being completed. In this context, the

Turkish Government—fearing that these forces may be deployed without taking into consideration its own concerns—has declared that all missions undertaken by the RDF will have to be first blessed by the Turkish Government and, indeed, the joint command idea is one of the measures worked out in this connection.

In any case, despite these points, it should be remembered that Turkey as a member of NATO has tied itself to certain commitments that overshadow independent action on the part of that country. Keeping this in mind, First Vice President Dr. Habibi said in connection with the stationing of the RDF on Turkish soil that the aim of the RDF is to implement the decisions of the world's powerful countries regarding political and military issues in the region. We do not have a positive view of this and condemn the presence of major powers in this region, he said.

ETTELA'AT Views Future Regional Prospects

NC1907123691 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 3 Jul 91 p 26

[Seyyed Mas'ud Jazayeri commentary: "The Future of the Region"]

[Excerpts] The three main issues which will shape the future of the region are: Iraq's situation following the Gulf war, the plan for security, and the status of Israel. The issue of energy will also be important. During the allies' war against Iraq, several people predicted the West would not be inclined to give up Baghdad as a counterbalance to Tehran, and some people believed the Iraqi system would be kept strong enough to continue to perform this function. This theory was proved correct when the victorious forces stopped before they got to Baghdad. [passage omitted]

The United States has gained a foothold in the Kurdistan region, to wield influence in Baghdad—and possibly at the region's borders with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Kurdistan region itself can be considered a suitable counterbalance to the Iraqi regime at the center.

—In the third stage of the era following the imposed war, Iraq is once again completely cooperating and coordinating its activities with the United States and the West. In view of the contradictory regional policies of Washington and Baghdad, Iraq appears to be thriving on the new potential stemming from the arrogant forces' support.

This era, which will focus on reconstructing the damage caused by the devastating war stemming from the occupation of Kuwait, will be characterized by complete cooperation with the United States and a resolution of differences regarding foreign policy. And this is happening when there seems to be no bright spot in the future of relations between Baghdad and Tehran.

—The plan for regional security in light of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti events and the issue of membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council continue to be very seriously discussed along with other regional issues. This discussion has been continuing despite the fact that two major events have paled in significance, namely the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the allied military victory.

It must not be forgotten that, in conjunction with the effort to establish a so-called regional security system, a plan seeking to capitalize on the regional tension stemming from the occupation of Kuwait is not unlikely. [passage omitted]

—Israel is benefiting from the current situation, especially the Arabs' weakness and their increasing dependency, the Eastern superpower's elimination from the balance of power, and the emergence of certain psychological factors.

Prior to the decline of communism and the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, the White House had to conduct its foreign policy with a view toward counterbalancing the USSR's support of the Arab countries. As this support dwindles, Israel finds itself in a position in which it is able to to dictate its desires more than ever before.

Israel thus has more room to influence the content of the peace proposals being presented. It is receiving financial assistance because of the oil war, as well as greater Soviet support and cooperation from the international community in expanding the Jewish population in the occupied territories. These are all factors which have tilted the balance in Israel's favor.

The United States considers itself the undisputed victor in the Persian Gulf war, and there is a very real possibility that it will entrust regional security to Israel. In such circumstances, it obviously is too farfetched to imagine that the Arabs will be able to exact any concessions from the usurpist Jerusalem regime.

—In the assessment of the above three plans, there are some fundamental points that must be mentioned: The White House seems to enjoy concocting various scenarios stemming from its apprehension regarding unpredictable developments. The bestial attacks the allies inflicted on the Iraqi people and the regime's extensive suppression of the uprising with U.S. cooperation have left wounds that cannot be healed. Even though the West has reaped immense benefits from the conflicts created due to nationalism and differences in culture and religion in this region, this is obviously not the last time we will have an experience like that of the recent past. To combat these factors and stem the Islamic Republic of Iran's influence, the United States needs a regime it can influence in Iraq to tackle these issues. The Americans think that they will be able to attain some of their objectives and to rein in Tehran by taking advantage of the Iraqi threat and its presence in the Cooperation Council.

The intifadah in Palestine is also considered a fundamental problem. Despite the increasing lack of identity among the reactionary Arabs, the popular uprising in the occupied areas is the main problem that has prompted the many contrived meetings in the region. The efforts of the United States, the USSR, Israel, the Arab reactionaries, and some of the Palestinian leaders have failed to suppress the uprising. In any plan for the region's future this bright spot should be kept in mind.

Iraqis' Entry Refused; Kurds Head for Border

LD2507101391 Tehran IRNA in English 0753 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Bakhtaran, 25 July, IRNA—Following escalation of fighting inside Iraq between the popular and government forces, some 30 Iraqi families have recently asked the Islamic Republic border authorities for permission to enter Iran.

The Iraqi families who are in Tuwaylah border region, opposite the Iranian border point of Nowsud, were carrying goods for sale and, therefore, their request to enter Iran was turned down, Paveh Governorate in this western province told IRNA.

Some 20,000 Iraqi Kurds from al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil are heading towards the Nowsud border point, the governorate added.

According to the Iraqi refugees in Iran, famine has severely hit the Iraqi people due to the months-long economic sanction imposed on the country in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War. In northern parts of Iraq, there is an acute shortage of bread, fruit and vegetables, they told IRNA.

'Propaganda Campaign' by Foreign Radios Denounced

LD1907120591

[Editorial Report] Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian at 0300 GMT on 19 July broadcasts its weekly 30-minute review of foreign radios. This week's program is about the propaganda campaign by foreign radios against Iran. The announcer opens by saying: "Propaganda is still the biggest weapon employed against the Islamic revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran. By spreading false issues and airing biased commentaries and analyses, foreign radios continue to incite public opinion against Iran and its Islamic system. News and programs broadcast by various radios, namely VOA, the BBC, and Radio Israel, are directly targeted at the structure of the Islamic Republic. By distorting truths and the current activities of the Islamic Republic's authorities, those radios strive to influence the views of the people of our country on cultural as well as political and economic issues."

The announcer then gives a few examples, including the case of Iran inviting foreign investors as an example of foreign media falsifying news, or implying that the revolution fervor has cooled in Iran. Another example given is that the foreign media have accused Iran of inciting fundamentalist uprisings in various Muslim countries.

About allegations that Iran incites unrest in other countries, the announcer says: "resorting to demagogic issues and distorting Iran's foreign policy is the basis of the propaganda and psychological warfare of the foreign radios. Perhaps Iran's only fault in the developments in Algeria is that the Muslim people of that country feel affection and enthusiasm about the Islamic revolution of Iran and its leadership."

About allegations of Iranian attempts to obtain nuclear weapons, the announcer says: "This is another ploy to deceive public opinion and distract it away from the current policies of the U.S. Administration and other big powers, who give weapons to some countries and boycott others. On the other hand, the aim of this propaganda ploy is to justify not transferring advanced technology to developing countries. In that respect, one could name the German Government's sabotage of the follow-up to the Bushehr nuclear power plant project."

Stressing the importance of the project for power supply, and that it has already cost millions, the announcer adds: "Because the interruption of the project would cost the people of Iran 10 billion dollars, our country's president has announced that the policy of the government is to complete it."

About Iran's alleged plans to manufacture chemical weapons, the announcer says "The foreign radios repeat such propaganda while our country is one of the victims of the use of chemical weapons. More than any other country, it has called for a fight against it, both its manufacture and deployment. During the imposed war, the powerful countries placed these weapons at Iraq's disposal to prevent Iran's military advances. And now, to deceive public opinion and impede the trend of the country's reconstruction, they make out that the aim of the Iranian Government, as it were, it to build and store chemical weapons. In any case, the aim of such venomous propaganda is to mar the reputation of Islamic Iran in the world, and prevent the transfer of advanced technology to our country. Our enemies strive to keep Iran backward, from a growth and development standpoint, and are trying to attain that goal by resorting to all sorts of tricks—especially propaganda weapons."

Customs Director on 'Free Zones'

NC2107082791 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 3 Jul 91 pp 1, 26

[Interview with Engineer Morteza Mohammad Khan, deputy minister of economy and finance and customs director; date and place not specified]

[Text] In an exclusive interview with KEYHAN, Engineer Morteza Mohammad Khan, deputy minister of

economy and finance, discussed the most recent decisions on customs regulations governing free commercial and industrial zones; the creation of "protected free zones" in various regions such as Arak, Esfahan, Tabriz, and so forth; and the Customs Department's readiness to implement a new international tariff system. Mohammad Khan also said that, considering the volume of imports arriving at customs, more balance is expected to be achieved between supply and demand.

Our correspondent reports that the director of customs first discussed implementation of customs regulations in the free zones, and said:

"The structure regulating a country's customs system usually is similar to its political structure. A free zone is not excluded from customs regulations, and import-export regulations apply under special conditions in such zones. Freedom of commerce in these zones is limited only by import-export regulations, and all the country's other laws apply as well."

On activities to be conducted in the free zones, he said:

"In the free commercial zones, the reexportation of goods exported here by other countries will be allowed. In these areas, specific laws drawn up by the Majles will regulate imports and exports. Industry can use these zones to boost their exports."

Engineer Mohammad Khan also discussed the type of activities to be conducted in the free industrial zones, and said:

"In the free industrial zones, investment conditions, investment participation, the banking system, and import-export regulations for foreign exchange have been assisted and fall under a special category which will allow these zones to compete with similar zones in other countries."

Continuing his remarks, the director of customs discussed "protected free zones", and said:

"In the Five-Year Plan, in addition to free commercial and industrial zones aimed at facilitating production, the creation of 'protected free zones' in the ports and inside the country under the supervision of the Customs Department has been conceived. Protected sea areas will be determined with the cooperation of the Ports and Shipping Organization and Customs Department, and ports that are relatively useful and can offer various facilities such as storage and docks are being considered."

He added: "The creation of 'protected free zones' in Bushehr, Bandar-e Emam Khomeyni, Bandar-e 'Abbas, and Chabahar port is being studied."

The deputy minister of economy and finance then discussed the way "protected free zones" will be set up inside the country, and said:

"Inside the country, the 'protected free zones' will be set up near industrial centers. The cities of Arak, Ahvaz, Yazd, Esfahan, Savalan region in Tabriz, Mashhad, and Zahedan will be studied by experts as sites for 'protected free zones' for commerce."

Speaking about the import and export of goods in the "protected free zones", the customs director said:

"In the 'protected free zones', imports will be allowed, but exports to Iran will be subject to domestic laws and regulations. In a 'free zone' the official in charge of that zone also will oversee regional management, while the Customs Department will manage the 'protected free zones'. Generally speaking, the objective behind creating 'protected free zones' will be to supply goods to domestic industries and for reexport by easing customs regulations in these areas. In the 'protected free zones', export companies will store raw materials near their production facilities and pay for the storage in rials. Thus, transportation costs also will be cut."

On the import of goods to the "protected free zones" inside the country and the reexportation of these goods, he said:

"The 'protected free zones' can reexport. For example, a Japanese company that intends to export goods to Europe can export its goods to these zones and use the storage facilities and other services it will pay for to reexport the goods to their final destination."

On the use of new international customs tarriffs, Engineer Mohammad Khan stated:

"Currently we are using the Brussels Tarriffs, but a new system known as the "coordinated system" which is now being used in most countries, especially in Europe, also has been translated and sent to our customs offices. Thus, we are ready in all ways to implement the new tarriffs. But the Majles will have to give final approval for their implementation."

He added: "Under the new system, the exchange of goods is much easier, because goods are broken down into smaller categories so we can determine prices more easily. This also will lessen differences between merchants, producers, and customs."

The customs director then said computerization of the customs system is being implemented, and said: "A considerable number of computers have been purchased, and dozens of customs personnel are receiving computer training."

On the volume of imports, the customs director said: "Considering that foreign exchage is being sold at soaring rates and the Commerce Ministry has lifted import restrictions, supply and demand have become more balanced. Because of increased domestic production, we also believe prices will come down."

He added: During the last year, about 23.4 million tonnes of goods were imported and 22.5 million tonnes were cleared through customs. In addition to what was cleared, goods that were not cleared during previous

years also were allowed through. Therefore, we can say that the clearing of such a large volume of imports is unprecedented."

Senegalese Minister Arrives in Tehran

NC2307061891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Mr. Djibo Leyti Ka, Senegal's foreign minister, arrived in Tehran this morning on an official visit and was received by Mr. Sheykholeslam, deputy foreign minister for Arab and African affairs.

Upon arrival, Mr. Djibo Leyti Ka said to our correspondent: In this visit, talks will be held with Iranian officials on reopening the Senegalese Embassy in Tehran, reactivating the joint economic, technical, and cultural commission, and on the upcoming Islamic Conference Organization session.

Mr. Djibo Leyti Ka added that he was carrying a written message from Mr. Abdou Diouf, the Senegalese president, for Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Meets With Rafsanjani

LD2407112591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Mr. Djibo Ka, the Senagalese foreign minister, this morning. During the meeting, which was also attended by Mr. Velayati, Mr. Djibo Ka handed to our country's president and conveyed the Senegalese president's formal invitation to Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani to take part in the Islamic summit, which will be held in Senegal in the near future.

He said: Because of its sensitive and constructive role in the region we would like to have wider cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. To that end we would like our embassy in Tehran to open as soon as possible.

Referring to the importance of the Islamic summit, he called for further help and cooperation from the Islamic Republic of Iran in organizing it. He assured that the presence of our country's president at the conference would be extremely effective in solving the problems of the Muslim world. Finally, he expressed the intention of his country's president to come to Tehran for further consultation with our country's president.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed his gratitude for the kind message of the Senegalese president. He stressed the need to hold the Islamic summit to review the problems and issues of Muslims and Muslim countries. He added: From the outset of the Persian Gulf crisis, we believed that the conference should be held and that the heads of Islamic countries should discuss solutions to the crisis. But, unfortunately, it is too late and many opportunities were lost. However, there are still numerous problems, the solutions of which can be decided at the conference.

He declared Iran's preparedness to help properly organize the conference. He expressed his pleasure and welcomed the Senegalese president's intention to come to Tehran.

Meets With Karrubi

LD2307160291 Tehran IRNA in English 1437 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Tehran, 23 July, IRNA—Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi today urged the upcoming summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to review problems of the Muslim world, and prepare ways to confront these problems, particularly the issue of Palestine.

Karrubi in a meeting with Senegalese Foreign Minister Djibo Ka also said common islamic beliefs, longstanding relations, and membership in the non-aligned movement have prepared "good grounds" for the expansion of Tehran-Dakar relations.

Djibo Ka informed Karrubi of his country's firm decision to expand mutual ties, and said Dakar is willing the joint economic commission of the two countries would become reactivated in order to investigate ways for bilateral cooperation.

The Senegalese minister who arrived here this morning for a three-day official visit, also announced that president Abdou Diouf would pay a visit to Iran in the future.

Meets With Khomeyni

LD2307210991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Mr. Djibo Ka, foreign minister of Senegal, went today to the holy shrine of Imam Khomeyni—may he be admitted to God's paradise—and laid a wreath on the tomb of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He then met with Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni, who referred to the efforts of the great leader of the islamic revolution for spreading Islamic thought and movement in different parts of the world.

Regarding the military and political situation of the world, especially the Middle East, he said: The issue of the new world order which has been raised by America means the expansion of America's absolute domination. The aim of its planners is to disarm Islamic and revolutionary movements. He added: We believe that the new world order is for the sake of fighting against pure Mohammadan Islam which was presented to the world by his eminence the imam. If the governments of the region are united, America and its satellites will not be able to achieve their aims.

Expressing his pleasure at visiting Iran, the foreign minister of Senegal said: His Eminence Imam Khomeyni is very popular in our country, and his simple way of life has greatly impressed me.

Meets With Yazdi

LD2407204591 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Mr. Djibo Ka. Senegal's foreign minister, today met with Mr. Yazdi, head of the judiciary. Referring to the visit of Senegal's president to the Islamic Republic of Iran on the eve of the convening of the summit meeting of the leaders of the Islamic countries, Mr. Djibo Ka described the visit of Mr. Hashemi- Rafsanjani to Senegal during the convening of the Islamic conference as an effective step in strengthening bilateral ties. He stressed the need for the strengthening and expansion of these relations.

The head of the judiciary, referring to current world issues, described the implementation of America's security plan as being merely for the sake of safeguarding the interests of the big powers. He said: Third-world countries should show greater vigilance toward such plans. Mr. Yazdi added: If the intention behind the disarmament plan is that arms should be taken away from weaker countries and that they should be only concentrated in the hands of the big powers, we are against such a plan. In conclusion, the head of the judiciary stressed the need for the expansion of judicial cooperation with Senegal.

Senegals minister of foreign affairs today also met with Mr. Foruzesh, minister of reconstruction jihad.

Senegal To Open Tehran Embassy

LD2307113891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Senegalese Foreign Minister Djibo Ka, who arrived in Tehran this morning leading an economic and political delegation, this morning met with Foreign Minister Velayati.

At the meeting, Mr. Djibo Ka, who gave Mr. Velayati a written message from Senegal's president to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, discussed the growing relations between the two countries and hoped that the forthcoming session of the two countries' joint cooperation commission will take place soon in Senegal. He also declared that his country was ready to open an embassy in Tehran and to send an ambassador.

The Senegalese foreign minister pointed to international developments and said: the foreign ministers' session of the Islamic Conference will be a test for the Islamic ummah.

Mr. Velayati, while welcoming the opening of a Senegalese embassy in Tehran, said: We think the Islamic Conference session in Senegal will be especially important in view of the important events that have occurred in the Persian Gulf, in the world of Islam, and throughout the world—in fact, the capability of the Islamic Conference to solve the problems of the world of Islam and of the present world is being tested. One of the principal issues of the Islamic Conference will be how the world of Islam should interract with the new world.

Mr. Velayati also welcomed the solving of differences between Senegal and Mauritania, two neighboring Islamic countries.

Iran-India Ties Viewed

LD2407093191 Tehran IRNA in English 0640 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Tehran, 24 July, IRNA—Iran-India relations, regional developments and the Kashmir issue were discussed in a meeting between the two countries' Foreign Ministry officials here Tuesday.

Foreign Ministry director general for West Asia Mir Mahmud Musavi in talks with the visiting joint secretary of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs Naresh War Dayal said any tension in the region will provide the ground for foreign influence. The Islamic Republic of Iran favors putting an end to the tension in this sensitive region, he added.

Emphasizing that the rights of the Muslim people of Kashmir must be respected Musavi called for cooperation among the regional states saying that it can help bring peace and stability. He also stressed that Iran is ready to employ all its efforts in this direction.

The Indian official arrived here Tuesday.

Pakistan

ICO Conference, Kashmir Resolution Reported

Officials Meet Mojahedin

BK2407160391 Hong Kong AFP in English 1449 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Islamabad, July 24 (AFP)—Three senior officials from the Jeddah-based Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) have met with Afghan mojahedin leaders in Pakistan in a bid to speed up the peace process in Afghanistan, diplomatic sources said Wednesday.

The sources said the team, led by OIC assistant secretary general Ibrahim Bakar, has held a series of meetings with the resistance in Pakistani northwestern city of Peshawar, near the border with Afghanistan.

The discussions of the team, which also met senior Pakistani officials here, focussed on the U.N. peace plan, according to the sources.

The plan calls for an end to arms supplies to the combatants and an intra-Afghan dialogue on the establishment of a transitional administration leading to elections in the strife-torn country.

The OIC delegation, believed to have been invited by Islamabad, arrived three days ago, ahead of an announced official visit here July 28-30 by Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

An official spokesman said last week Mr. Velayati would have talks with the resistance leaders at a meeting to be attended also by Pakistani Foreign Ministry officials.

Ministry secretary general Akram Zaki urged the Afghan resistance at talks with their leaders earlier this month to work for a political settlement in line with the U.N. peace plan.

According to the spokesman, Mr. Velayati's forthcoming visit aimed at evolving a common approach towards a political solution of the 12-year-old civil war that has cost more than a million lives.

The visit is also expected to discuss ways of bridging the differences between the Pakistan-based Sunni mojahedin groups and the Afghan Shiite groups in Iran.

Pakistan shelters more than three million Afghan refugees while about two million reside in Iran.

The Afghanistan problem is to come up before the 20 Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference scheduled for August 4-8 in Turkey.

Mojahedin Afghan interim government (AIG), which operates from Peshawar, has rejected any involvement of Afghan President Najibullah and his party in the peace process.

Pakistan also considers Mr. Najibullah's "refusal to hand over power to Afghan representatives" as a "major obstacle" to the establishment of peace in Afghanistan.

Resolution To Be Presented

BK2407112691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Pakistan is to table a draft resolution on Jammu and Kashmir dispute at the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] foreign ministers conference beginning in Istanbul from the 4th of next month. The dispute is already on the provisional agenda of the five-day conference. A Foreign Office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad today that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, the Afghanistan situation, the post-war situation in the Middle East, and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's proposal on arms control in South Asia would be the most important issues from Pakistani point of view.

Foreign Secretary Meets With Egyptian Leaders

BK2407161091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan has had talks with Egyptian leaders on the question of adopting a common stand on the Middle East problem, regional security, and the proposal for nuclear nonproliferation in the region. During his three-day visit to Egypt, which ended yesterday, he apprised the Egyptian leaders of the developments in Pakistan, Islamabad's relations with India, and the Kashmir and Afghanistan problems. The two sides stressed the need for coordinating their efforts at the Istanbul conference of Islamic foreign ministers. The talks reflected the spirit of Islamic brotherhood, unity, and solidarity between the two countries. The foreign secretary met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Musa and other senior officials.

Veteran Politician Urges Sharif To Step Down

BK2407104991 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 Jul 91 pp 1, 9

[By Mohammad Yasin]

[Text] Islamabad, July 14—Launching a blistering attack on the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] government for what he called it "utter failure", the veteran politician Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan urged Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to step down in the larger national interest.

At a "meet the Press" programme of the Rawalpindi Press Club Sunday evening, he said that the only solution of the myriad and complex internal and external problems confronting the country, is the formation of the national government.

He enumerated a lengthy charge-sheet against the IJI government headed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, charging it with abject failure in resolving the stupendous issues faced by the nation. The top-most failure of the government was in the sphere of law and order as it had spread out from one province to the rest of the country.

He termed the law and order as the most aggravating problem, as a result of which the people suffered from sense of acute insecurity. In this kind of grave situation, he said, it wass futile to expect any investment in industries by Pakistani or foreign investors. He flayed the government for negotiating with the dacoits [robbers] and paying ransom to them for the release of the Japanese students and the Chinese engineers. He said that it sounded all the more strange in view of the fact that the government was shy of holding negotiations with the Opposition leaders. He spoke of the victimisation of its political foes by the government. He said that unemployment was at its peak and there was a ban on fresh recruitment while the corruption had touched a new high.

Nawabzada Nasrullah faulted the government for its Gulf policy, as a result of which the interests of the Muslim Ummah have suffered greatly. He said Pakistan was one of the 28 countries which sided with the American interests in the Gulf. He said the government went along with the US which has not only stopped our military and economic aid but has also stopped assistance to the Afghan refugees to whose support it was committed on the basis of principles. He accused the IJI government of bowing down to the IMF without waiting for the budget. He criticised the government policy of privatisation, under which the profitable concerns were being handed out to a coterie of industrialists close to the rulers for a song.

The government policies, he said, had created a sense of despondency among the toiling millions. This situation, he said, was further accentuated by the external hazards. The government, he said, was going back on its commitments to the Kashmiris and their cause was going abegging as the government had failed to raise the Kashmir question at the international levels including OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference]. He criticised the handling of the Azad Kashmir affairs by the IJI government and the arrest of the AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] Prime Minister.

Nawabzada Nasrullah accused the government of compromising on Kahuta [nuclear] project. He said the government delegation that visited Washington met with failure.

He was critical of the government's Shariah [Islamic Law] Bill in that the powers of the Federal Shariat Court had further been reduced. He also criticised the water accord. He said that a 'rotten to the core and corrupt administration' could not implement Islamic laws.

Nawabzada Nasrullah denounced the recently promulgated ordinances which he said were aimed at curtailing fundamental rights and drawing excesive powers by curtailing the role of judiciary. He said that under the arbitrary laws the government would get powers to bar jurisdiction of the superior judiciary and suppress fundamental rights without declaring emergency in the country.

Replying to a question, he said the object of convening the All Parties Conference [APC] was to pull out the masses from despondency and feeling of uncertainty, under which they are suffering because of the blunders of the government. He said the APC would discuss issues first and look for alliances later.

He said the main problem that we should tackle is the survival of the country. He said that G.M. Syed talked openly against Pakistan and the Chief Minister of Sindh visited him frequently.

He said the country was buzzing with rumours which may have a grain of truth in them. The sooner the present rulers quit, the better it is, he said adding that the signals they are receiving should be understood by them.

Sanctions Against South Africa To Remain

BK2407154391 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Pakistan will maintain economic, trade, cultural and political sanctions against South Africa because of that country's policy of apartheid. Pakistan's step is totally in line with UN resolutions and the stand of the majority of African governments and liberation movements. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that Pakistan is cautiously reviewing the situation in South Africa and will revise its policy regarding that country whenever it deems it necessary.

Sri Lanka

Seylan Bank To Carry on BCCI Operation

BK2407123791 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1127 GMT 24 Jul 91

["OANA/pool" Item]

[Text] Colombo, July 24 (LANKAPUVATH)—The Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI] will resume operations in Sri Lanka on July 29.

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka in a press release announced this evening that it had delegated control of the business of BCCI to the Seylan Bank.

The Central Bank in its press release states, "The head office of the BCCI registered in the Cayman Islands, on a receiver having been appointed by the governor of the Cayman Islands, on 7th July 1991 suspended the business in Sri Lanka of the BCCI. Consequent on a receiver having been so appointed the foreign currency assets of the BCCI in Sri Lanka have been frozen abroad. [no end of quotation as received]

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka which took immediate control of the banks's books, has satisfied itself that the domestic operations of the BCCI in Sri Lanka are financially sound and is confident that its customers need not have any fears [words indistinct].

The monetary board of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka acting in the best interests of the customers and staff of the BCCI in Sri Lanka has under the powers vested in it, assumed control of the business of the BCCI in Sri Lanka and has delegated the control so assumed by it, to Seylan Bank Limited to carry on the business of the BCCI in Sri Lanka. Under the control of Seylan Bank Limited, the BCCI Sri Lanka branch will resume normal domestic banking operations on Monday, the 29th July, to the best of its [words indistinct] the extent of them [words indistinct] to it in this regard.

The Central Bank of [words indistinct] are making every effort to recover the foreign currency assets due to the Sri Lanka branch of the BCCI.

Since the [word indistinct] operations of the BCCI in Sri Lanka are financially viable, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka assures the public that their best interests will be safeguarded at all times.

Troops Advancing Toward Camp; 890 LTTE Killed

BK2507112491 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 25 Jul 91

[Text] Government troops yesterday were replenishing ammunition and rations and regrouping in preparation for a final advance on the Elephant Pass security camp. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that the final tally in the latest round of fighting in the early hours of Tuesday [23 July], when troops of Operation Balavegaya defeated the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] in two swift but furious battles, was 204 terrorists killed. Official sources, giving details of Tuesday's fighting, said LTTE had made two attacks from their southern flank on government troops between [words indistinct]. Ground troops with their air support counterattacked successfully. Meanwhile, the Air Force continued to attack and destroy LTTE positions to reach the Elephant Pass security camp. Troops of Operation Balavegaya are now directly facing the Elephant Pass camp, a distance of about 3 km for the final leg of the advance. According to official estimates, 890 LTTE terrorists have been killed in the battle at Elephant Pass.

Iraq Resumes Buying at Colombo Tea Auctions

BK2507140091 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1033 GMT 25 Jul 91

["Oana/Pool item"]

[Text] Colombo, July 25 (LANKAPUVATH)—After nearly a year, Iraq made her first purchase in Colombo when a small quantity was purchased at this week's tea auctions. Iraq can be expected to increase her purchases gradually, as operational problems are overcome. It will be remembered that Iraq was the single largest buyer in any sale at the Colombo auctions and producers will no doubt hope that this important buyer will be able to operate at the highest level before too long.

A spokesman for the tea trade told LANKAPUVATH the main Egyptian buyer also made a welcome return to the Colombo auctions and bid on [word indistinct] in the ex-estate catalogue. With the drop in the tea market having been arrested last week, it was evident that buyers who previously adopted a wait and see policy, had decided to secure their purchases without further delay.

Additionally, Western out markets that look towards Colombo in the third quarter for better liquoring teas, have also commenced showing their interest.

All of the above factors contributed to an useful improvement in the market although prices have not reached satisfactory levels as yet.

He also said the Uva quality season is not showing a progressive improvement due to erratic weather. Nevertheless, teas with seasonal charcater are being produced and we hope to see flavoury invoices before long.